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TRB

from Washington
April 4, 1981

Inflation Panacea

I wait by the water cooler and the tortured philodendron in the press office of the Department of Labor and at nine on the dot the messenger hurries in with armfuls of the 21-page Consumers Price Index. We grab them and telephone bulletins to our offices. Yep, the inflation rate for February (pushed by decontrolled energy prices) bounced up one percent into the double digits again to 12.1 percent on an annual basis. So that means the average real spendable earnings of a married worker with two children are down 4.4 percent from last year. And it means that if you had a dollar bill under Lyndon Johnson in 1967 it bought what its takes $2.63 to buy today. That's a big jump in 14 years.

Murray Weidenbaum, chairman of Reagan's Council of Economic Advisors, is testifying on the new figures, so I go over to the congressional Joint Economic Committee—a chamber with polished wood paneling and a ceiling as high as the room is wide. There aren't many people there. Weidenbaum emphasizes not the size of the jump but its consistency with his own forecasts; the administration is getting hit by everybody for being too optimistic. This prediction at least is correct and Weidenbaum uses it in his appeal to Congress to "help the struggle to bring inflation down."

How that struggle goes will determine the fate of the Reagan administration, the price of a bar of soap, and maybe the political control of Washington for the next 20 years. The Reagan honeymoon has suddenly halted and it's to the administration's credit, I think. It hasn't stalled with its big program; it's come right out with it. It's hard to call it anything but radical, or revolutionary if you like. The government has been expanding for 50 years. It has balanced the budget only eight times in 50 years (the last time was in 1969). It's been living beyond its means. Nearly everybody agrees it's time to consolidate. (How Reagan proposes to do that is, of course, another matter.)

The cycle in presidential popularity is well known. The presidency is an impossible job and the public has an exaggerated notion of what the president can do. First there's a honeymoon. Then the president faces the necessity of making hard decisions. The honeymoon ends. No president has been reelected since 1956. Reagan has precipitated reality. He, and again I say to his credit, has jumped right into the economic mess without waiting, with the aid of his extraordinary whiz-kid David Stockman, who was ready with a new budget before the last inaugural float had trundled down Pennsylvania Avenue. He testifies practically every day before a committee or television show. He never loses his temper. He never takes offense. It must be enormously boring. He is sustained by an inner faith in his theory that cuts in taxes can supply private capital that will stimulate the economy and reduce inflation.

By precipitating things Reagan has forced voters to choose for or against his new program, and his approval rating has taken a sharp drop on the Gallup poll: 59 percent approve and 24 percent disapprove. That's the lowest score at two months of the five most recent presidents. (At this point four years ago, 75 percent approved Carter and only nine percent disapproved.) It's not serious if Reagan can make his program go from here. Nearly everybody agrees we need reform. It would be disastrous for Democrats, I think, if they opened a frontal attack. But it's the details that matter.

The Reagan program seems callously biased against the poor. Example: the legal aid program for the poor, supported by the American Bar Association, has been killed. Again, figures indicate that a fifth of all households receiving welfare (658,000 families) would lose benefits. Health secretary Richard Schweiker tries to explain this, but it's hard to understand.

Those are criticisms from the liberals. Reagan is having trouble, too, from the conservatives, though it is pretty well concealed so far. The fact is that many of Reagan's orthodox conservative economists don't like Kemp-Roth, don't believe this is the time for a three-year, 30 percent across-the-board tax cut, and fear that instead of quenching inflation it might pour oil on it. In an indirect way the rosy Reagan projections of benefits to come, defended by Weidenbaum at the hearing I attended, strengthen the doubts. Is enthusiasm leading the Reagan supply-siders into dangerous illusions?

Here is Herbert Stein, economic adviser to Nixon and Ford, a man with a sense of humor, writing for the right-of-center American Enterprise Institute's *Public Opinion*: "The whole tenor of the recent discussion of productivity (i.e., Kemp-Roth) has generated the expectation that rather simple and pleasant measures will yield large and prompt results in the form of more rapid growth." He says this is "disastrous." Why? Because it might promote the belief that inflation can be solved "simply by speeding up the growth of productivity, without having to take any of the bitter medicine of spending cuts, tight money, high interest rates and unemployment." He adds that this belief "is almost certainly in error, and basing policy upon it will lead to more inflation and to slower rather than more rapid growth."

As a variant of this, neoconservative economist Irving Kristol asks how to solve the inflation problem politically by slashing government spending. He is decisive about his answer: "It can't be done!" Yet in a December 1980 *Wall Street Journal* article, he recommended that scholars take their stand on faith, not logic; in other words, adopt supply-side economics. He went on to offer ambiguous praise for the program: "We really do not need to know exactly how it will work. . . . The very fact that it is working, and is perceived to be working, will itself make it work faster and more effectively." He continued, "A skeptic might inquire: what if this new conservative political economy doesn't work? To which one can only reply, it had better work. It is the last best hope of democratic capitalism in America and if it fails—well, then conservatives can concentrate on nostalgic poetry and forget all about political economy. Some one else will be in charge of that." Fifty years ago the unemployed had their panacea too—$200 a month for everybody over 60. Is Kemp-Roth the new Townsend Plan?

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts, Vol. 184, No. 14, Issue 3456, April 4, 1981. Published weekly (except the issues of January 3, July 11, August 8, August 29) and distributed by The New Republic, Inc., 1220 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036. Phone (202) 331-7494. Single copy, $1.25; yearly subscriptions, $28; foreign, $31; students, $17.

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(ISSN 0028-6583). Item g. Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide and Media Review Digest. The New Republic is available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

Send all remittances, inquiries about subscriptions and undelivered copies, and changes of address to Subscription Service Department, The New Republic, P.O. Box 955, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

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Cover: "The Creation of Man" by Marc Chagall. Courtesy of the Granger Collection. Article on page 15.

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The New Republic is phototypeset and produced by 19th Street Graphix, Washington, DC.
Production Supervisor—*Kathy Sullivan*
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THE NEW REPUBLIC

April 4, 1981

Auto-deception

The Reagan administration is deeply solicitous of businessmen, but does it believe in capitalism? In the first major test of its free market principles, the answer apparently is no. Reagan's decision to arrange artificial restrictions on Japanese automobile imports puts the rest of his economic program in a revealing light. His proposed massive redistribution from the poor to the rich, through budget and tax cuts, is justified on the alleged grounds that this is necessary to end inflation. Complaints that the program is unjust are rebuffed with assurances that an unfettered economy is the best welfare program. But it develops that the Reaganites don't really want an unfettered economy. So the rich embroidery of theory adorning their schemes unravels, and their callousness is exposed naked to the world.

Auto import restrictions will affect inflation more than anything else Reagan has done or proposed to do. The effect will be entirely harmful. The Japanese, after all, are not forcing their automobiles on helpless American customers. They are responding to demand. Trade restrictions mean that some Americans will not be able to buy the cars they want, and all others will have to pay more. The prices of Japanese cars will go up, and, protected from competition, the prices of American cars will follow.

High wages in the auto industry also will be protected, and will influence wage settlements throughout the economy. It might seem illiberal to carp about high wages, and we do not mean to suggest that auto workers' pay is too high in any absolute sense. But the typical American auto worker is better off than the typical American auto buyer. The average auto worker makes almost $22,000 for a 40-hour week, plus fringes and any overtime. In a survey taken two years ago, the median domestic automobile owner had an income under $18,000. Government policies that raise car prices to protect auto workers' wages, therefore, represent a net transfer from the less affluent to the more so. They do not deserve support from liberals.

Roger Smith, chairman of General Motors, claims that import restrictions will not raise car prices, since the domestic industry is now giving large rebates and discounts off its official prices. Mr. Smith either thinks or wants the public to think that rebates and discounts don't amount to lower prices resulting from competition. Here is another capitalist who doesn't believe in capitalism.

True believers in capitalism also would know that import restrictions will not save jobs. The dollars that go abroad to pay for automobiles eventually come back in purchases of American goods. These sales create more new jobs than can be saved by restrictions on imports. The eternal political problem for free trade is that the jobs it creates are scattered through the economy, while the jobs it costs are concentrated and highly visible. But this should not matter to an administration marching so arrogantly under the banner of free-market capitalism.

In a pathetically transparent subterfuge, worthy of its immediate predecessor, the Reagan administration insists that the import restrictions will be "voluntary." According to a *New York Times* report on the deliberations of a cabinet-level task force: "The consensus view of the task force, according to Administration officials, was that the restrictions should result from a unilateral decision by Japan. . . . In this way, it was argued, the Reagan administration might avoid

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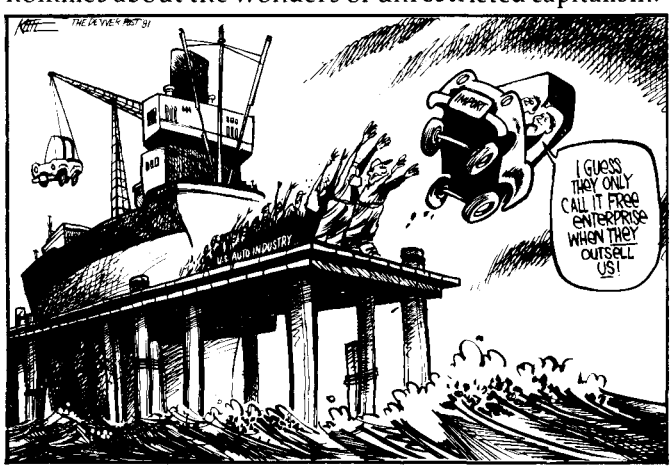
charges that it was on the side of protectionism."

There are three defects in this notion of "voluntary" restrictions. First, they are not voluntary at all. The Japanese have no reason to restrict their auto exports except for pressure from the US government and threats of formal restrictions if they don't. Second, the American consumers who will pay higher prices because of this arrangement, and the unknown thousands who will lose jobs in export industries, certainly have not volunteered. Third, the effects of a bad policy are not wiped out just because it is "voluntary." As with Carter's wage and price "guidelines," Reagan's "voluntary" import restrictions, to the extent they work, will have precisely the same effect as mandatory controls.

It's amusing to watch the Reaganites trying to negotiate their scheme past the antitrust laws. The US government spends millions every year policing the economy against agreements among competitors to restrict supply and thus raise prices. Conspirators in restraint of trade ordinarily must meet in darkest secrecy, and go to jail if they get caught. Yet now the US government is pressuring Japanese auto makers to engage in a classic antitrust conspiracy. To make their "voluntary" ceiling work, the Japanese companies not only will have to stop competing with American manufacturers, but also will have to set quotas and stop competing among themselves. Wily occidental lawyers will find a way out of this legal dilemma, but there is no way out of what it says about the Reaganites' free-market pretentions.

When Reagan's budget cuts were announced in February, we pointed out that the government contributes to inflation in dozens of ways that have little or nothing to do with the size of the deficit—policies like trade protection, farm price supports, overindexing of pensions, and tax breaks for real estate ("The Budget-Cutters' Ball," *TNR*, February 28). While the Reaganites push with undiminished zeal for cuts in food stamps, Medicaid, and so on, which will do nothing to curb inflation, they are actually adding to the list of genuinely inflationary government policies. The least they can do from now on, we think, is to spare us homilies about the wonders of unrestricted capitalism.



Mike Keefe

White House Watch

Haig and the System

Although March 24 was an unusually arduous day for Secretary of State Alexander Haig, he made time to appear in early afternoon in the White House press room and demonstrate once again his determination to be in practice what the President has said he is in principle, the Reagan administration's chief formulator and spokesman of US foreign policy. The occasion was a visit to the White House by Japanese foreign minister Masoyoshi Ito. Haig, introducing Ito to the press, noted that he had had "extensive conversations" with the "secretary of state, myself"; with the secretaries of defense, treasury, and commerce; with the President's special trade representative, and finally, that morning, with the vice president and "the President himself."

Reporter: "How about the national security adviser?"

Haig: "He was in attendance."

This display of cool disdain was the nearest Haig had come in public to suggesting that the security adviser, Richard V. Allen, is not in the same league with Haig and other competitors for high place on the foreign policy scene. The day proved to be one of ups and downs for both Haig and Allen, for once more down for Haig than for Allen, and Haig's flick of contempt at the Ito news session went generally unnoticed. But it was a minor, passing reflection of a situation at the peak of the Reagan presidency that involves factors much more basic than the personalities and ambitions of the competitors.

One of the factors is Reagan and his topmost White House assistants' understanding of him. They make it evident that their first duty is to have him always appear to be totally in charge of everything, without messing with the grubby details as Jimmy Carter did. His most senior assistants, Counselor Edwin Meese III and staff chief James A. Baker III, and his chief selector of personnel, Pendleton James, have told department heads and prospective appointees time and again that they are the President's people and nobody else's, owing allegiance to him and to nobody else. It's been reported and not denied at the White House that the redoubtable secretary of defense, Caspar Weinberger, claimed a right to choose his own people and was batted down by Meese and James. Secretary Haig, the most favored and prestigious of Reagan's department heads, told a congressional committee that some of his key appointments are being held up at the White House. What seemed at first to be merely a normal assertion of presidential prerogative has become an obsession which actually slows rather than hastens the appointment process. An impression grows (with this observer, anyway) that a fundamental uneasiness

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Correspondence

Income for the government

To the editors:
James Tobin's article on Reaganomics ("Sleight of Mind," *TNR*, March 21) suggests that the administration consider canceling a number of so-called tax expenditures—"open-ended licenses to taxpayers to dispose of potential federal revenues." If I translate that correctly into English, Professor Tobin believes that all income automatically belongs to the government and that current tax laws allow Americans to keep and spend too much of their own money.

Widespread rejection of that philosophy is what elected Ronald Reagan in the first place.

Ron Nessen
Washington, DC

Grant's harebrained policy

To the editors:
In his appraisal of William McFeely's biography of Ulysses S. Grant (*TNR*, February 28), your reviewer, Justin Kaplan, refers to President Grant's "harebrained" policy goal to bypass Congress and unilaterally annex the Dominican Republic with the rationale that the race problem could be solved "by moving the black people of the United States to the Caribbean."

Kaplan's description of Grant's policy is fair enough. But Kaplan's reference to this incident, together with McFeely's account, inaccurately purport that this scheme was initiated by Ulysses S. Grant. In fact, the proposal to avert a race problem by transporting blacks out of the United States as a policy supported by the US government had its origins with no less a man than President Lincoln, the man who set Grant's career in motion. The significant difference was that Lincoln sought support of his own particular version of the "colonization" scheme from Congress, which appropriated an initial $500,000 in 1862.

In his excellent biography of Lincoln, Oscar Handlin notes that on December 3, 1861, in his annual message to Congress, Lincoln "urged the appropriation of federal funds for colonization." In Lincoln's view, the most desirable place for such a colonization of blacks was either Liberia or Central America, hence the basis for Grant's own prescription. The scheme became more desirable to Lincoln as the Civil War dragged on and as his hopes to experiment in Delaware with a plan to free that state's slave population over a 30-year period in return for a $500 per slave reimbursement to the slaveowners received no support from Congress.

Francis J. Costello Jr.
Everett, Massachusetts

Liberals and income

To the editors:
I am glad I subscribe to *The New Republic*. In one publication I can hardly afford I can get instruction on how to invest a million dollars, read analysis of the administration's economic program written by an octogenerian who has two sources of income and draws retirement income, and follow the thinking of a learned editorial writer who also has two sources of income and who believes that Social Security pensions should be taxed. That is a nice journal of politics and the arts that you neo-liberal chaps put out. I just wish I felt a little better after I read it.

Kirk Wickersham
Edina, Minnesota

Calling a fool a fool

To the editors:
I applaud the courage Charles Krauthammer showed in writing on the crackpot character of Dick Gregory (Washington Diarist, *TNR*, February 28). I read local newspaper reports on Mr. Gregory's speech of February 9 and ached for someone to call him as they saw him. His recent accusations against the Center for Disease Control about their use of kidnapped Atlanta black children in bizarre medical experiments show his flights into fantasy to be taking on intergalactic proportions.

It never ceases to amaze me to see how my fellow liberals and progressives fail time and again to impart any perceptive criticism toward those black leaders, such as Gregory, whose speeches tend to be nothing short of ridiculous diatribes. These people do little to shed new light on black-white relations, nor do they help the images of other hard-working and thoughtful principals of black America.

Surely equality of justice must also encompass calling a fool a fool, no matter what his or her race, color, or creed.

David B. Ouimet
Holyoke, Massachusetts

Income tax amendment

To the editors:
Was TRB testing his readers in his March 7 column when he wrote that the federal income tax was revived by the 14th Amendment in 1913? The income tax amendment was the 16th Amendment.

R. K. Steiger
Scottsdale, Arizona

Cast no stones

To the editors:
Walter Laqueur's dissection of Lord Carrington's plan for peace in the Middle East ("Europe, Go Home," *TNR*, March 7) is a very perceptive piece of writing. What his analysis has not done, however, is show why America's policy toward that troubled region is in any way superior to what the Europeans are trying.

The United States policy, which is based on the notion that Egypt, Jordan, and the rest of Israel's Arab neighbors will sell their Palestinian brothers down the river as soon as the price is right, is in many ways more short-sighted than Europe's proposal. It may be that we can pacify some of the Arabs some of the time, but anyone who thinks we can pacify all the Arabs all the time is only fooling himself. If Israel were to sign Camp David accords with every state in the region, there still would not be peace. The violence, as Laqueur correctly points out, would go on in the Middle East, in different places and in different combinations.

But instead of admitting that, for all its weaknesses, Lord Carrington's proposal is no worse than anything the United States has been able to come up

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The editors welcome correspondence from TNR's readers. Letters intended for publication should include the correspondent's full name, address, and telephone number, should be typed double-spaced, and held to under 200 words. Longer letters may be abridged due to lack of space.

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about Reagan underlies the obsession and related phenomena at the Reagan White House.

Reagan's easy demeanor, a quality that contributes mightily to his reputation as the master communicator of our time, could be made to seem to cloak a lack of command over affairs, or even cloak an inner disinterest in command, if his entourage did not incessantly remind one and all that he is in command. There is occasional evidence that he hasn't mastered major details of policy that an effective President must have mastered. The Evans-Novak newspaper column, which has offered some insightful White House coverage lately, reported March 23 that Reagan at a staff meeting indicated with a question that he didn't know that the US is committed to complying with the first and second strategic arms treaties even though consideration of SALT II has been suspended. The report acutely embarrassed Press Secretary James Brady, who indicated that he was at the staff meeting. "You don't go in and listen . . . and then come out and say what a private conversation is," Brady said. Refusing to say he couldn't confirm the report, he said instead, "I won't confirm it" and could say no more for Reagan than, "Since he is the person that makes that policy, he's aware of it." Nothing else like this has been reported since Reagan became President, but Brady's response to the report is suggestive and worrisome. In a small way it justifies a wonder whether Reagan adequately comprehends the national security and foreign policy process that he undertakes both to command and to reform.

ONE OF THE oddities on the current national security front is the fact that Richard Allen demonstrates a better understanding of that process than Secretary Haig does, notwithstanding Haig's much broader experience as White House deputy to Henry Kissinger, Richard Nixon's last White House staff chief, Army vice chief of staff, and NATO military commander. What Allen understands in a way Haig doesn't seem to is a circumstance that the National Security Act of 1947 recognized and embedded in law—that the President must have the power and the tools to oversee the conduct of foreign policy and that the power and the tools must be emplaced at the White House. Two of the tools mandated by that law were the National Security Council and an assistant to the President for national security affairs who would be the President's personal instrument of policy command. "Now, Jimmy, this is going to be *my* council," President Truman told James Forrestal, one of the act's architects and the first secretary of defense, when Forrestal tried to take command of the new structure. Henry Kissinger—mistakenly, he now says—made himself as security adviser preeminent over the secretary of state to an unprecedented degree, but his predecessors and successors at the White House were never ciphers. After Nixon appointed Kissinger both secretary of state and security adviser, and after Gerald Ford cut him back to secretary only, Kissinger is known to have confirmed in his own mind a belief that he had long held and had turned with exquisite skill upon Secretary of State William P. Rogers. The belief is that secretaries of state simply cannot run the foreign policy process, or oversee its conduct by others, as a competent security adviser with his president's full backing can from the White House. Kissinger, dominant though he was to the end of his and Ford's term in 1977, felt that he was deprived of much of his effectiveness when he ceased to be both secretary and security adviser. Reasons for doubting a secretary of state's ability to oversee the whole foreign policy operation are complex. But the basic reason is the simplest: every major department, most notably Defense, Treasury, and Commerce, and including Agriculture, are involved. They are fiefdoms, and their fiefs-in-chief do not happily submit to direction from one of themselves, even if he be the senior cabinet officer, which the secretary of state is.

So goes the wisdom which has become conventional since the National Security Act enshrined it. Haig's attempt at dominance, aggressively launched and marked though it was with early successes, suggests that the wisdom is sound. The evidence that this is so must be perceived in terms of the State Department—or any department—versus the institutional White House, and not in the popular terms of State vs. NSC or Haig vs. Allen. It's possible though unlikely that Allen and his new NSC staff—he's put together quite an impressive group of 30-odd professionals, including several mid-level holdovers from the Carter-Brzezinski staff—will lose out while "the White House" wins. Allen's controlling calculation is known to be that the system is bound to work toward White House preeminence and that in the end the NSC staff and its head, the security adviser, are bound to be recognized as the chief instruments of White House oversight.

WHATEVER else may be said of Dick Allen, and Washington is loaded with intelligent people who think him a lightweight or worse, he's a canny character. He's made an asset, for instance, of being put (along with domestic adviser Martin Anderson) under Counselor Meese. OK, so Meese is the boss—let him battle in private with Haig while Allen keeps the low profile imposed upon him by Reagan. OK, so the State Department fouls up the preparations for Reagan's recent visit to Canada. Meese, staff chief Baker, and Michael Deaver, third man in the ruling Reagan triumvirate, learned from that experience pretty much what Allen expected them to learn and, in a way, let them learn—namely, that State alone was not equipped to do the whole preparatory job. OK, so Deaver and not Allen and his NSC gets oversight authority over preparations for future presidential trips abroad. The NSC staff is there to coordinate policy preparation and surely will be used to some extent, probably a growing extent. Whether Allen's

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canniness amounts to sufficient wisdom is disputed by people who know a lot about the national security process. It's inconceivable to some of them, for instance, that Allen waives the staff's accustomed authority to review outgoing State Department policy cables—a waste of time, Allen says. Some of them believe, too, that Meese and Reagan let Haig seize a vital segment of the authority to form and oversee interdepartmental policy study groups. So what? says Allen—NSC will be represented on these groups and they generate immense amounts of wasted effort, anyhow. Finally, Allen's confidence in his and the Allen NSC system's future rests upon three factors: the aforementioned pull of authority toward the White House; what he is certain is his high standing with President Reagan and Vice President Bush; and the NSC staff's retained authority to review, comment upon, and suggest alternatives to the policy options that flow from State, Defense, and other departments to the National Security Council and the President. James Baker, through whose staff all written communication to the President goes, affirms that Allen retains this authority and that Allen and the NSC staff freely use it.

The foregoing impressions were gathered before Reagan put Vice President Bush in charge of the President's "crisis management team." Haig had told a congressional committee that morning, March 24, that he deplored any such separation of crisis management from the regular conduct of foreign policy, over which he clearly believed he'd achieved ascendancy. The decision to make Bush the crisis manager was reached the previous week and was first reported by Martin Schram in the March 22 *Washington Post*. It was being said at the White House Monday the 23rd that the President would announce the Bush assignment later that week, probably Thursday. Haig publicly questioned it on Tuesday and brought upon himself the presidential announcement Tuesday evening. Two passages in the announcement rate quotation in full:

"During any emergency the President would of course be available to make all critical decisions and to chair the crisis management team as his presence may be needed."

And:

"As in the past, the National Security Council staff will provide the administrative and other staff support to the President and the Vice President for the crisis management team."

Anyone who knows Allen well can hear him laughing and saying between I-told-you-so's: OK, so Kissinger had his Washington Special Action Group and Brzezinski had his Special Coordination Committee for crisis management. I've got the staff and I'm at the White House and the President is saying here that he and the Vice President need me and my staff. That's good enough, for now.

John Osborne

On the Hill

Republican Pork Barrel

These are hard times for the righteous. On March 10 David Stockman held a press conference to formally announce that day's submission to Congress of the Office of Management and Budget's 1982 budget revisions. An insolent reporter asked the OMB director why the Clinch River breeder reactor in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, had survived the cut. Stockman had opposed the project back when he was a thrifty Michigan congressman, but the reactor has the backing of Tennessee senator Howard Baker, who also happens to be majority leader. "I'm not running this government single-handedly," Stockman replied. ("Snapped," the *New York Times* reported gleefully, "with some asperity." The *Washington Post* was blunter: "The budget director simply was overwhelmed by political pressure.") The administration is testy about the Clinch River breeder reactor because it cheapens the budget document's assertion that any exception "leads to many other exceptions and to erosion of the plan and of its long-term benefits for the economy and for all Americans." But exceptions are being made, both by the president and by powerful Republican senators and representatives who profess to endorse his austerity program. These exceptions are hypocritical. They are also unfair, because every exception amounts to a transfer of funds from reduced programs such as Medicaid and food stamps, which benefit the needy, to the Republican pork barrel.

The exception made for Clinch River is particularly unfair. Even that spendthrift southern Democrat, Jimmy Carter, tried to eliminate funding for the reactor. Stockman likes to point out that Congress restored enough money to the project each year of Carter's presidency to keep it alive, but that hardly justifies surrender on the part of the new president. The February 18 budget document explicitly says, "development and demonstration programs in electric energy systems and energy storage . . . can and should be supported by the private sector." The Clinch River breeder reactor is a conspicuous example of such a demonstration program, as it is situated near Oak Ridge, which Tennesseeans proudly call the nuclear energy capital of the world. When word reached Howard Baker that Stockman wanted to cut financing for Clinch River, Baker reminded the president that he had endorsed federal funding for the project when campaigning in Knoxville. Was the president going to break a promise he had made to the Atomic Industrial Forum? Reagan answered by adding $200 million to his budget, earmarked for Clinch River. Nuclear power plants, it seems, just aren't cut out for the free market.

Not all of the majority leader's compassion was

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spent on the nuclear power business. He also pleaded on behalf of nature lovers and the Army Corps of Engineers for the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. The proposed park, situated in Kentucky and Tennessee, will "preserve some of the heritage of Appalachia," according to Tom Griscom, a Baker staff aide. Federal funds are needed to buy the land and to provide all the necessities for preserving Appalachian wildlife and vegetation: roads, trails, campsites, and lodges. Carter had allocated $27 million for fiscal year 1982, but Baker knew that Stockman might find the outlay wasteful. So before the ink was dry on the February 18 budget book, which promised to "defer some less critical parts of [Army Corps] projects such as the development of recreation areas," Baker dispatched a team of staffers to OMB to make the reduction as painless as possible. The staffers negotiated Carter's $27 million down to $10 million. Baker may have lost the lodges, but it looks as though he can keep the roads, trails, and campsites.

Another federal project saved by the intercession of a powerful Republican was the Job Corps. The residential job training program for disadvantaged youth, which started in 1964 as part of the Economic Opportunity Act, is one of the few Great Society programs to have won the support of Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah. Hatch talked David Stockman out of making a $15 million reduction in the program's budget. Not surprisingly, Utah is the site of one of the largest training centers in the country for the program (of 102 centers nationwide, Clearfield, Utah, is one of four that enroll over 1,000 students). Hatch insists, however, that his enthusiasm for the program is not political. "I stand up for what I believe in," he says, adding that there are many people in Utah who don't much like the Job Corps. It's hard to see why they wouldn't like it; after all, the federal government picks up the annual $12,000 tab for each student's tuition. Because the Clearfield center is so large, and because the Job Corps isn't in every state, Utah gets a disproportionately large chunk of federal money—a heresy to most conservatives, but a pleasant boon to residents of Utah of all political persuasions.

THE JOB CORPS seems, on balance, to be a worthwhile program. Ninety percent of its alumni are successful in finding jobs, getting back into high school, or going on to college. But any questions about the program's cost-effectiveness are met with high-handedness and some uncharacteristically liberal platitudes from Hatch. In response to the argument that a year with the Job Corps costs as much as a year at Harvard, Hatch says, "We're talking about functionally illiterate kids. . . . We're talking about saving kids from a lifetime on the public dole." Ed Dale, Stockman's press liaison at OMB, is more dispassionate. "It's a judgment call as to how much good that particular program does," he says. Because much of the money that funds the Job Corps is funneled through the private sector—labor unions and businesses administer 70 percent of the program—presumably one would want to be wary of abuses. But Hatch insists that any cuts would be "penny wise and pound foolish." That's not the sort of talk one expects from a conservative, but then, Hatch insists that he is not "some kind of right-wing maniac, despite some portrayals in the press." Rather, he is a "compassionate conservative." Richard Jaffe, director of the Job Corps, agrees. Jaffe calls Hatch "very compassionate," and "an outstanding member of the US Senate."

ALFONSE D'AMATO, the Republican freshman senator from New York, defeated Jacob Javits and Elizabeth Holtzman last fall and rode into office on Reagan's coattails. His loyalty to the administration was advertised in an article that appeared on the March 24 *New York Times* op-ed page. D'Amato exhorted his readers, " . . . let us not pick the Reagan package to pieces or delay its passage unto death. Let us not fiddle while the fires of inflation burn and the clouds of yet another recession darken the horizon. Let us not place our regional requirements or our partisan prejudices ahead of the national interest. Let's give Ronald Reagan a chance." But he doesn't sound much like a Reaganite when he talks about Economic Development Administration grants to New York City. Stockman's budget book specifically recommends "rescinding appropriations for EDA," but when the *New York Times* reported that grants might be blocked for the Brooklyn Army Terminal, the Astoria Film Studios in Queens, and the Elgin Theater in Manhattan, D'Amato said, "Applications in the funding pipeline that will provide an influx of capital that will generate jobs should be allowed to go ahead, especially if there has been a real expectation that funding for these projects is forthcoming." D'Amato talked to Joseph Wright, under secretary of commerce, about unfreezing the three grants. A few days later, on a visit to New York City, the president announced that he would reverse the freeze on the Brooklyn Army Terminal and the Elgin Theater grants.

Much of the credit for convincing the administration to unfreeze the money should go to Ed Koch, New York's Democratic mayor. But D'Amato's defiance probably gave pause to those in the administration who assume they can count on the Republican senator from New York to sell austerity to his constituents. Ed Dale at OMB insists that the EDA unfreezing is a "non-retreat." Dale says the Elgin Theater grant, a $540,000 loan guarantee, was far enough along the "pipeline" to justify letting it go. And the Brooklyn Army Terminal grant will be turned back to the federal government as a subsidy for the city's purchase of the terminal. "There wasn't much unfreezing," Dale says. But for that very reason, what few loans slip through should be scrutinized for fairness. Are the Elgin Theater and the Brooklyn Army Terminal in greater need than other EDA dependents? Probably

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not, but New York is a state that Republicans would like to win over.

There have been other examples of pork barrel favoritism by Republicans. When OMB proposed to forgo the April 1 increase in dairy price supports as an economy measure, Senator Mark Andrews of North Dakota, an important dairy state, voted against it in committee. Andrews had tried to attach an amendment to the bill which would compensate farmers for the loss by banning imports of casein, a cheap foreign milk derivative that competes with domestic milk. But when the committee refused to accept Andrews's pill sweetener, he voted against the administration. Jesse Helms, chairman of the Agriculture Committee, argued on the Senate floor against dairy interests. Meanwhile, however, Helms has interests of his own. He favors the tobacco subsidies so dear to the hearts of farmers in his home state of North Carolina. Helms says they are merely loans, but the interest paid by farmers on those loans is subsidized by the federal government. The only reduction in tobacco subsidies proposed thus far by OMB is in the form of user fees, which would amount to a nick of only eight million dollars out of roughly $200 million in loans per year. A forthcoming administration farm bill will eliminate interest subsidies, according to the March 10 budget book, but the fact that no significant reductions have been sought thus far shows how nervous the White House is about challenging Helms.

To be fair, Democrats have been protective of their pork barrels too. Senator Russell Long talked Reagan and Stockman into restoring $27 million in cuts to the Red River navigation project, an Army Corps of Engineers nugget for his home state of Louisiana. The fight for banning casein imports was led on the Senate floor by John Melcher of Montana, a Democrat. But Democrats aren't beholden to the president's austerity plan. The mandate to cut is a Republican mandate. And more Republicans than Democrats are successfully circumventing that mandate to save projects that would be good for the folks back home.

Timothy Noah

Reagan's labor theory of value.

A Philosophy of Money

Many of the Reagan administration's hard-hearted cuts in federal spending are justified by practical considerations, such as the elimination of waste. But there is a prodigious amount of philosophy in this budget. There probably is more philosophy than there is economics. David Stockman and the other seers in the Office of Management and Budget, supply-side theories notwithstanding, rather pride themselves upon the extent to which their budget defies economic doctrine. Like true crusaders they swear a faith and plunge in a sword. They serve their president's mellifluous vision of an America restored to greatness by profits. They believe it is business that readies the country for its mission in history, which is the promotion of freedom. There is an eschatology of growth in this budget. The freeing of capital for the great adventure of investment is the good deed that will hasten the miracle at the end. Yet there is also a more prosaic principle at the heart of the president's plan, which is the real reason for the dramatic diminishments in social services. It is an attitude about money, and its place in human life.

The basic idea is that money is something you earn. It is a reward for labor, a proof of will. It is, therefore, a perfect expression of justice, because those who have it, made it. Against this view, which may be called Reagan's labor theory of value, there is the view, championed by certain liberals in the name of their needful constituencies, that money is something to which you are entitled. It is a reward for need, a proof of social membership; and it is a perfect expression of injustice, because some members of the society have too much for their needs and others not nearly enough. (The origin of many liberals in the middle class may be owed in part to the native sympathy of the children of that class for a feeling of entitlement. The poor edify them with the example of an entitlement that seems so much more justified than their own.) The claims of ambition are being advanced from the White House against the claims of charity, and Congress will have to adjudicate between them.

There is some merit in Reagan's attitude. It does not love all people but it respects them. The economic agency it imputes to all is a supremely American version of the belief that people can master their fate. There is a horror of passivity in the president's budget, and of pity, that is quite attractive psychologically. It is surely preferable to the moral glamour that is frequently attached to misfortune. Victims should not be models. Some of Reagan's opponents speak for an "equal distribution of wealth," but the concept of equality is inappropriately applied to money, unless one is willing to do away with the marketplace. The marketplace cannot be retired, however, except by a concentration of power so great it could not leave the other freedoms alone. The Grand Distributor is the natural ally of the Grand Inquisitor. And the entrepreneur is the natural enemy of both.

But the Republican confidence in the moral status of money lacks irony. It does not acknowledge that many rich people have never put in a single day of what the president calls "productive behavior." Their only achievement in business was to have been born to their parents. Money is often a perfect expression only of luck. The concept of equality, moreover, is surely appropriate to health care and the other conditions of a

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civilized life. People have rights to such things. They are not merely the perquisites of other people's prosperity; and nobody is claiming a right to be rich. The poor, it is said, are corrupted by the expectation of charity. They are emasculated by a social system that accustoms them to alms, and there is some truth to that. Yet the reluctance to give alms is no less corrupting of the rich than the eagerness to receive alms is corrupting of the poor. And all the classes have their alibis. The rich dwell on the welfare swindles, the poor on the inheritance of privilege, and both would like to think that that is the whole story, so they need not lift a finger. Only the lower middle class can be counted upon, almost always, for industry.

It is the provision for that class—the class that creates stores and factories in the hope of transcending itself—that exposes the bad faith in Reagan's budget. There is a small detail of the plan, perhaps its most startling feature, that concerns the Small Business Administration. Severe limits are being placed upon the SBA's lending authority. The president proposes to reduce the Carter allocation for the SBA by $45 million for fiscal year 1981; for 1982 the figure rises to $116 million. Reagan apostrophizes the bravery of the small businessman, the spiritual mettle of the individual who starts from scratch, but in his budget he has a different client in mind. There is business and there is Business. The hero of this budget is not the entrepreneur. It is the corporation. Reagan and the windy little pack of boosters led by George Gilder are protecting the interests of corporations by disguising them as entrepreneurs. Bureaucrats and managers are being awarded a moral cachet they do not deserve. They are being cloaked in a holy American myth, in an unimpeachable ideal of personal success that does not remotely resemble what they actually do. This deception was inaugurated a little earlier by Lee Iacocca, who wanted to be taken for Willy Loman.

The attitude about money exemplified by the budget brings to mind a similarly sanguine attitude of the 19th century. Saint-Marc Girardin, the philosopher of prosperity in France in the 1830s and 1840s, also argued that money is a manifestation of merit. "The proof of ability is wealth," he enjoined. Poverty, therefore, was not an injustice, but a proof of *in*ability; and ability, in a society that gave it space, would always find its reward. This faith in the natural fairness of the market—indeed, in its natural morality—was a bit simple, and it still is. But at least Girardin was thinking of the middle class, which asked only for the chance to rise from need, and for the open society in which such self-propelled mobility was possible. This constellation of ideas, in other words, is not quite so offensive in those for whom business is a risk, who will not walk away from failure with a fortune, who have no pensions and portfolios upon which their families can rely. It is perfect ideology (if corrected by the understanding that poverty is not always the fault of the poor) for the small businessman. The Republicans propose it for the large corporation. The economic individualism of the Republicans is merely rhetorical. There is no personal danger in the capitalism of the corporations. The corporate executive may lose his job; he can read about his loss in the *Wall Street Journal* and cool off for a bit in Palm Beach. The small businessman has only Chapter 11 to protect him, and he must read the classifieds and borrow some cash. The small businessman takes nobody, or only a very few, down with him. It is not the stupidity of small business that has thrown Detroit back into the Depression.

There is, then, a philosophical sleight-of-hand in the administration's economic forecast. The ideal of the self-made man is invoked in a manner that will have no impact upon the spirit of enterprise. The poor will not be given employment, but "workfare"—work that is not work, which is even more demoralizing than no work at all. The middle class, already in despair over the cost of credit, will still be able to aspire to no more than making ends meet. And the rich will withold their newly liberated capital from public service. The spectacular profits of decontrol have not been consecrated to the development of new energy sources; they are being used for gargantuan acquisitions of mineral resources that will keep the oil companies in control when there is no more oil. These are the likely economic consequences of the president's vision.

Leon Wieseltier

Coming:

Stephen Chapman on Food Stamps.

Exploiting the third world is getting hard.

White Man's Burdens

In his recent novel, *A Bend in the River*, V. S. Naipaul describes a pretentious white history professor, Raymond, who is chief consultant for a swaggering new African head of state. Raymond, known as the "Big Man's White Man" among the Africans, is writing the "Big Book" of history about this somewhat moneyed developing country. In fact, his intellectual endeavors are so pressing that Raymond appears only momentarily at his own parties—and then to hold court. But as the novel unfolds we begin to realize that the "Big Man's White Man" actually has fallen out of favor with the ruthless dictator. Raymond's dawn-to-midnight work schedule is actually a ruse to hide his own feel-

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ings of desolation while the "Big Man" decides what to do with him.

Naipaul's story epitomizes the way in which old colonial relationships have been stood on their heads in the third world. The Europeans, Japanese, and Americans who scramble for plum jobs in developing countries often describe feelings akin to Raymond's in their ever-shifting relationships with clients who no longer care to be patronized, but now often do the patronizing themselves. "They expect Americans to be strong and tough," says one consultant. "They think it's odd if people behave otherwise. But they don't want to be controlled."

Caught in the middle of all these shifting psychological currents are increasing numbers of American "soft scientists"—economists, sociologists, urban planners, architects, and others—who make their livings as consultants in the third world. As growth in the developed countries has stagnated, American professionals and competitors from other countries have worked diligently at selling their services abroad.

For the Americans, the recent change in administration brings new uncertainties, and possibly new difficulties. During the Carter years, the touchstone of US policy toward aiding the less developed countries was increased multilateralism—an attempt to mitigate hostilities to Americans by defusing charges of Bully Boy colonialism. Now the Reagan people appear to strongly favor bilateral, singly funded aid plans to be used strictly as American foreign policy tools—a policy already fomenting strong resentment abroad.

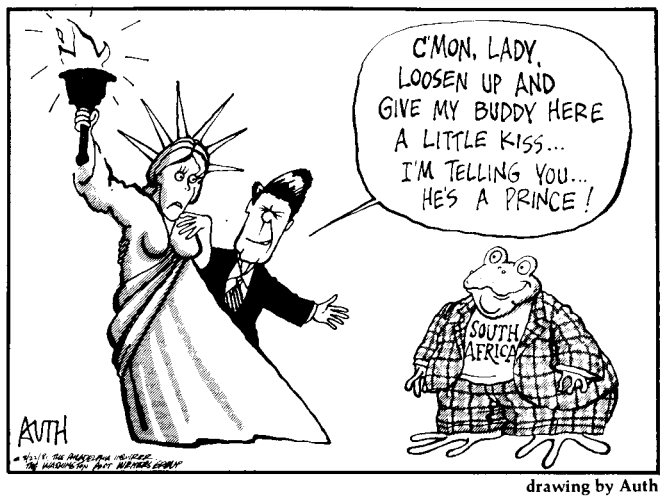
The consulting business has been undergoing enormous change. Once, in the 1950s and 1960s, American consultants were like maharajahs. They could get away with abstract and vague projects such as massive five-year economic models, using methods that came very comfortably out of American graduate school training. The LDC consulting business was dominated by relatively well financed big companies such as Robert R. Nathan Associates, the Stanford Research Institute, and Arthur D. Little, Inc., which found a ready market in projects pre-sold to host governments by AID or other US or international agencies. But these comfortable, easily financed consulting projects —with profits usually over 15 percent of total revenues—have largely disappeared in recent years as the LDCs have become more practical about what their needs really are. Particularly in the parts of the third world that have come into money during the 1970s and have their own consulting dollars to dole out—Mexico, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Philippines, and Nigeria—consultants now must push much harder to satisfy.

As a consequence of this new shift in money, the LDC consulting business has undergone a fundamental change. Today jobs tend to be both more specific and more diverse: slum clearance in Cairo, field work with Uruguayan farmers, designing a sanitation system for a new Nigerian town. To fill these new specific demands, hundreds of small consulting firms appeared during the 1970s selling their wares in agronomy, sociology, demographic planning, architectural design, and urban planning. Easy entrance, low capital costs, and shrinking academic salaries enticed many into the field and continue to do so.

According to an experienced United Nations staffer who deals with LDC consultants regularly, "Over the last 10 years hundreds of small consulting firms have sprung up. If they are well run, they have a flexibility and intelligence that many of the big firms don't have. Also, I think that a lot of good people came out of the 1960s with a real commitment to helping the LDCs. But this doesn't necessarily mean that they make it as consultants. Many of these jobs take an instant adaptability and a lot of natural intelligence. . . . Each situation—working in a small village in South Yemen, for example—is entirely different, and the people you work with are often difficult."

Behind a blasé front, today's consultants sweat out each new contract. Tough-minded Swedes, Germans, Frenchmen, Britons, and Japanese began pushing hard during the mid-1970s to get LDC jobs. Now everybody chases after Arab-backed development jobs, or ambitious, locally financed Nigerian rural development contracts. Although neocolonial attitudes sometimes resurface in places like Chad or Tanzania (which still rely exclusively on financial handouts from the UN and World Bank), they are passé in the high-flying outposts like Lagos. Even the LDC consultants who were never considered socially aware have dropped their patronizing attitudes. It seems that high financial stakes will bring out the liberal in just about everyone.

Being a consultant to the third world still carries a certain cachet on the cocktail party circuit back home. But those who have done the work (and their spouses) know better. One urban planner and architect, for example, recalled a Mideast trip he made in late 1979 for his firm. "I was sent to a Gulf country as a troubleshooter," he said. "My company had been hired to do a massive rural development job—to design an entire new town. All the design plans were done, but somewhere along the line everyone on both sides got to hate each other. I was superficially briefed about these



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problems at home, but I had no idea that things would be so bad.

"After a 14-hour plane trip I found myself face-to-face with a highly nervous and distracted deputy minister. He was actually a nice guy and was cordial, but he was desperately worried about keeping his job. He was sitting on a couch all wired up, chewing gat [a Middle Eastern weed], drinking Coke, and smoking cigarettes—all at the same time. As soon as I opened my mouth I realized that he was just responding automatically, and didn't really want to hear anything I had to say.

"He was not nervous because of me, but because of his boss, the minister—a total egomaniac who amused himself by screaming at people when he wasn't taking graft. We had originally gotten our contract from a different ministry in the government, and had been very pleased. Somehow the egomaniac got control and we had to answer to him, as did the poor deputy minister. To make things worse, he was a sanitary engineer and only had an eye for the plumbing details in the master plan. He seemed to think that everything else was extraneous.

"After one futile week I packed up in defeat and went back to Boston. For the next six months I worked 14-hour days revising the whole thing. . . . Finally I flew back and it was approved. But my firm has not been paid a cent after an entire year."

GETTING contracts from the World Bank, the UN, or AID is serious business and crucial for many consulting firms. Nevertheless, often the most lucrative contracts are gotten directly from a moneyed third world country such as Nigeria. The trick is to get one contract—often by "low-balling" it (doing a job for less money than it actually costs), in order to land really profitable contracts later. With luck, an economist, architect, or urban planner working for a small firm who can make it to Lagos on one small contract, hobnob with a few deputy ministers, and spend a week or two dropping into offices of friends of these deputy ministers, will get some lucrative contracts. This way, consultants do not have to go through expensive, time-consuming proposals that are required by all international agencies to get contracts.

The protocol of baksheesh—when, to whom, and what to give—often is alluded to in the LDC consulting world, but specifics are hard to come by. The most common stories are told about gifts such as expensive luggage, wristwatches, and briefcases that are slipped to deputy ministers. According to some who know the business and who claim that one cannot do otherwise, recommendations are often made for a deputy minister's son who is applying to graduate school in the US.

Critics generally agree that international agencies are fairer than LDC governments in choosing contractors. "Unfortunately, the consulting firms that want to keep a low profile and do an honest professional job have a hard time making a go of it in this business," says one insider. "It is often the pushy fakers who get the contracts and can best deal with the LDC governments, where the government officials are constantly on the take," he says. "The World Bank just simply does not operate that way."

AS COMPETITION has increased, many smaller consulting firms, understaffed and lacking funds, have had a tough uphill fight. Because of the sporadic nature of contract work, many small outfits often will have no jobs at all for several months, and then suddenly are swamped by two or three huge projects. The term "body shop" commonly is used by LDC architects who purposely steer clear of these consulting sweatshops, which lead a precarious existence and seldom make more than five to eight percent profit on a project.

The proposals themselves, depending on the scale of the job, are expensive and financially draining for many firms. A typical architectural design for rural development, for example, costs about $15,000. The government giving out the jobs often receives as many as two to three dozen proposals for each project. Although consultants generally have an image of shaking down their clients for huge sums of money, very often in today's competitive market the opposite occurs. Underbidding, in fact, drove many small operations out of business during the 1970s.

Many consultants agree that third world dislike of Americans also has limited business. "We send forays occasionally down to South America," says Gary Fromm, a vice president of Stanford Research Institute. "But the South Americans are convinced these days that only Yankee imperialists exist north of the border. They are hiring the French to do a lot of their consulting." Latin Americans have developed an intricate networking system of their own, whereby Colombians are hired by Venezuelans, Brazilians help out Colombians, and so on.

Robert Nathan, one of the best-known economic consultants in the international field, concurs that LDC consulting has changed tremendously. "I think in many ways we have replaced ourselves. . . . [This is] a trend that in the long run is a healthy one for the LDCs, which are now much more independent." Nathan's firm still does a good deal of regional LDC consultant work such as helping to set up transportation systems, but the domestic side of his business has been growing at a much faster rate than the international side. "Our biggest demand right now in LDC work is through major lending institutions which want feasibility studies done before they lend out any more money. Many of the small consultants underbid us constantly for AID contracts, and we do not think it is worth going after these projects when so little money is involved."

If the Reagan administration pursues its aim to concentrate more on bilateral than on multilateral aid, it superficially would increase the number of consulting

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jobs for Americans, since bilateral programs usually have a built-in stipulation that a majority of those hired to carry out a project come from the donor country. But because of the stress being put on using aid as a US foreign policy tool, some consultants worry that whatever new business they might get from President Reagan will be more than offset by losses of jobs resulting from LDC fears of a new round of American colonialism. The fear is that increased dislike abroad as a result of intense American muscle-flexing could backfire by throwing more work into the hands of hungry competitors like the Germans, who studiously keep a low profile while urging the US on to behave in a more macho way.

Anne Colamosca

Anne Colamosca is a New York writer.

The Origin of the Specious and the Dissent of Man.

Creationism Isn't Science

by Niles Eldredge

Despite this country's apparent modernism, the creationist movement once again is growing. The news media proclaimed a juryless trial in California as "Scopes II" and those who cling to the myth of progress wonder how the country could revert to the primitive state it was in when Darrow and Bryan battled it out in the hot summer of 1925 in Dayton, Tennessee. But the sad truth is that we have not progressed. Creationism never completely disappeared as a political, religious, and educational issue. Scopes was convicted of violating the Tennessee statute forbidding the teaching of the evolutionary origins of mankind (although in fact he was ill and never really did teach the evolution segment of the curriculum). The result was a drastic cutback in serious discussion of evolution in many high school texts until it became respectable again in the 1960s.

Although technological advances since 1925 have been prodigious, and although science news magazines are springing up like toadstools, the American public appears to be as badly informed about the real nature of science as it ever was. Such undiluted ignorance, coupled with the strong anti-intellectual tradition in the US, provides a congenial climate for creationism to leap once more to the fore, along with school prayer, sex education, Proposition 13, and the other favorite issues of the populist-conservative movement. Much of the success of recent creationist efforts lies in a prior failure to educate our children about science—how it is done, by whom, and how its results are to be interpreted.

Today's creationists usually cry for "equal time" rather than for actually substituting the Genesis version of the origin of things for the explanations preferred by modern science. (The recent trial in California is an anachronism in this respect because the plaintiff simply affirmed that his rights of religious freedom were abrogated by teaching him that man "descended from apes"). At the heart of the creationists' contemporary political argument is an appeal to the time-honored American sense of fair play. "Look," they say, "evolution is only a theory. Scientists cannot agree on all details either of the exact course of evolutionary history, or how evolution actually takes place." True enough. Creationists then declare that many scientists have grave doubts that evolution actually has occurred—a charge echoed by Ronald Reagan during the campaign, and definitely false. They argue that since evolution is only a theory, why not, in the spirit of fair play, give equal time to equally plausible explanations of the origin of the cosmos, of life on earth, and of mankind? Why not indeed?

The creationist argument equates a biological, evolutionary system with a non-scientific system of explaining life's exuberant diversity. Both systems are presented as authoritarian, and here lies the real tragedy of American science education: the public is depressingly willing to see merit in the "fair play, equal time" argument precisely because it views science almost wholly in this authoritarian vein. The public is bombarded with a constant stream of oracular pronouncements of new discoveries, new truths, and medical and technological innovations, but the American education system gives most people no effective choice but to ignore, accept on faith, or reject out of hand each new scientific finding. Scientists themselves

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promote an Olympian status for their profession; it's small wonder that the public has a tough time deciding which set of authoritarian pronouncements to heed. So why not present them all and let each person choose his or her own set of beliefs?

Of course, there has to be some willingness to accept the expertise of specialists. Although most of us "believe" the earth is spherical, how many of us can design and perform an experiment to show that it must be so? But to stress the authoritarianism of science is to miss its essence. Science is the enterprise of comparing alternative ideas about what the cosmos is, how it works, and how it came to be. Some ideas are better than others, and the criterion for judging which are better is simply the relative power of different ideas to fit our observations. The goal is greater understanding of the natural universe. The method consists of constantly challenging received ideas, modifying them, or, best of all, replacing them with better ones.

SO SCIENCE is ideas, and the ideas are acknowledged to be merely approximations to the truth. Nothing could be further from authoritarianism—dogmatic assertions of what is true. Scientists deal with ideas that appear to be the best (the closest to the truth) given what they think they know about the universe at any given moment. If scientists frequently act as if their ideas *are* the truth, they are simply showing their humanity. But the human quest for a rational coming-to-grips with the cosmos recognizes imperfection in observation and thought, and incorporates the frailty into its method. Creationists disdain this quest, preferring the wholly authoritarian, allegedly "revealed" truth of divine creation as an understanding of our beginnings. At the same time they present disagreement among scientists as an expression of scientific failure in the realm of evolutionary biology.

To the charge that "evolution is *only* a theory," we say "all science is theory." Theories are ideas, or complex sets of ideas, which explain some aspect of the natural world. Competing theories sometimes coexist until one drives the other out, or until both are discarded in favor of yet another theory. But it is true that one major theory usually holds sway at any one time. All biologists, including biochemists, molecular geneticists, physiologists, behaviorists, and anatomists, see a pattern of similarity interlocking the spectrum of millions of species, from bacteria to timber wolves. Darwin finally convinced the world that this pattern of similarity is neatly explained by "descent with modification." If we imagine a genealogical system where an ancestor produces one or more descendants, we get a pattern of progressive similarity. The whole array of ancestors and descendants will share some feature inherited from the first ancestor; as each novelty appears, it is shared only with later descendants. All forms of life have the nucleic acid RNA. One major branch of life, the vertebrates, all share backbones. All mammals have three inner ear bones, hair, and mammary glands. All dogs share features not found in other carnivores, such as cats. In other words, dogs share similarities among themselves in addition to having general mammalian features, plus general vertebrate features, as well as anatomical and biochemical similarities shared with the rest of life.

How do we test the basic notion that life has evolved? The notion of evolution, like any scientific idea, should generate predictions about the natural world, which we can discover to be true or false. The grand prediction of evolution is that there should be one basic scheme of similarities interlocking all of life. This is what we have consistently found for over 100 years, as thousands of biologists daily compared different organisms. Medical experimentation depends upon the interrelatedness of life. We test drugs on rhesus monkeys and study the effects of caffeine on rats because we cannot experiment on ourselves. The physiological systems of monkeys are more similar to our own than to rats. Medical scientists know this and rely on this prediction to interpret the significance of their results in terms of human medicine. Very simply, were life not all interrelated, none of this would be possible. There would be chaos, not order, in the natural world. There is no competing, rational biological explanation for this order in nature, and there hasn't been for a long while.

Creationists, of course, have an alternative explanation for this order permeating life's diversity. It is simply the way the supernatural creator chose to pattern life. But any possible pattern could be there, including chaos—an absence of any similarity among the "kinds" of organisms on earth—and creationism would hold that it is just what the creator made. There is nothing about this view of life that smacks of prediction. It tells us nothing about what to expect if we begin to study organisms in detail. In short, there is nothing in this notion that allows us to go to nature to test it, to verify or reject it.

AND THERE is the key difference. Creationism (and it comes in many guises, most of which do not stem from the Judeo-Christian tradition) is a belief system involving the supernatural. Testing an idea with our own experiences in the natural universe is simply out of bounds. The mystical revelation behind creationism is the opposite of science, which seeks rational understanding of the cosmos. Science thrives on alternative explanations, which must be equally subject to observational and experimental testing. No form of creationism even remotely qualifies for inclusion in a science curriculum.

Creationists have introduced equal-time bills in over 10 state legislatures, and recently met with success when Governor White of Arkansas signed such a bill into law on March 19 (reportedly without reading it). Creationists also have lobbied extensively at local school boards. The impact has been enormous. Just as

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the latest creationist bill is defeated in committee, and some of their more able spokesmen look silly on national TV, one hears of a local school district in the Philadelphia environs where some of the teachers have adopted the "equal time" or "dual model" approach to discussing "origins" in the biology curriculum on their own initiative. Each creationist "defeat" amounts to a Pyrrhic victory for their opponents. Increasingly, teachers are left to their own discretion, and whether out of personal conviction, a desire to be "fair," or fear of parental reprisal, they are teaching creationism along with evolution in their biology classes. It is simply the path of least resistance.

Acceptance of equal time for two alternative authoritarian explanations is a startling blow to the fabric of science education. The fundamental notion a student should get from high school science is that people can confront the universe and learn about it directly. Just one major inroad against this basic aspect of science threatens all of science education. Chemistry, physics, and geology—all of which spurn biblical revelation in favor of direct experience, as all science must—are jeopardized every bit as much as biology. That some creationists have explicitly attacked areas of geology, chemistry, and physics (in arguments over the age of the earth, for example) underscores the more general threat they pose to all science. We must remove science education from its role as authoritarian truth-giver. This view distorts the real nature of science and gives creationists their most potent argument.

The creationists' equal-time appeal maintains that evolution itself amounts to a religious belief (allied with a secular humanism) and should not be included in a science curriculum. But if it is included, goes the argument, it must appear along with other religious notions. Both are authoritarian belief systems, and neither is science, according to this creationist ploy.

The more common creationist approach these days avoids such sophistry and maintains that both creationism and evolution belong in the realm of science. But apart from some attempts to document the remains of Noah's Ark on the flanks of Mt. Ararat, creationists have been singularly unsuccessful in posing testable theories about the origin, diversity, and distribution of plants and animals. No such contributions have appeared to date either in creationism's voluminous literature or, more to the point, in the professional biological literature. "Science creationism" consists almost exclusively of a multi-pronged attack on evolutionary biology and historical geology. No evidence, for example, is presented in favor of the notion that the earth is only 20,000 years old, but many arguments attempt to poke holes in geochemists' and astronomers' reckoning of old Mother Earth's age at about 4.6 billion years. Analysis of the age of formation of rocks is based ultimately on the theories of radioactive decay in nuclear physics. (A body of rock is dated, often by several different means, in several different laboratories. The results consistently agree.

Vint Lawrence

And rocks shown to be roughly the same age on independent criteria [usually involving fossils] invariably check out to be roughly the same age when dated radiometrically. The system, although not without its flaws, works.) The supposed vast age of any particular rock can be shown to be false, but not by quoting Scripture.

All of the prodigious works of "scientific creationism" are of this nature. All can be refuted. However, before school boards or parent groups, creationists are fond of "debating" scientists by bombarding the typically ill-prepared biologist or geologist with a plethora of allegations, ranging from the second law of thermodynamics (said to falsify evolution outright) to the supposed absence of fossils intermediate between "major kinds." No scientist is equally at home in all realms of physics, chemistry, geology, and biology in this day of advanced specialization. Not all the proper retorts spring readily to mind. Retorts there are, but the game is usually lost anyway, as rebuttals strike an audience as simply another set of authoritarian statements they must take on faith.

Although creationists persist in depicting both science and creationism as two comparable, monolithic belief systems, perhaps the most insidious attack exploits free inquiry in science. Because we disagree on specifics, some of my colleagues and I are said now to

(*continued on page 20*)

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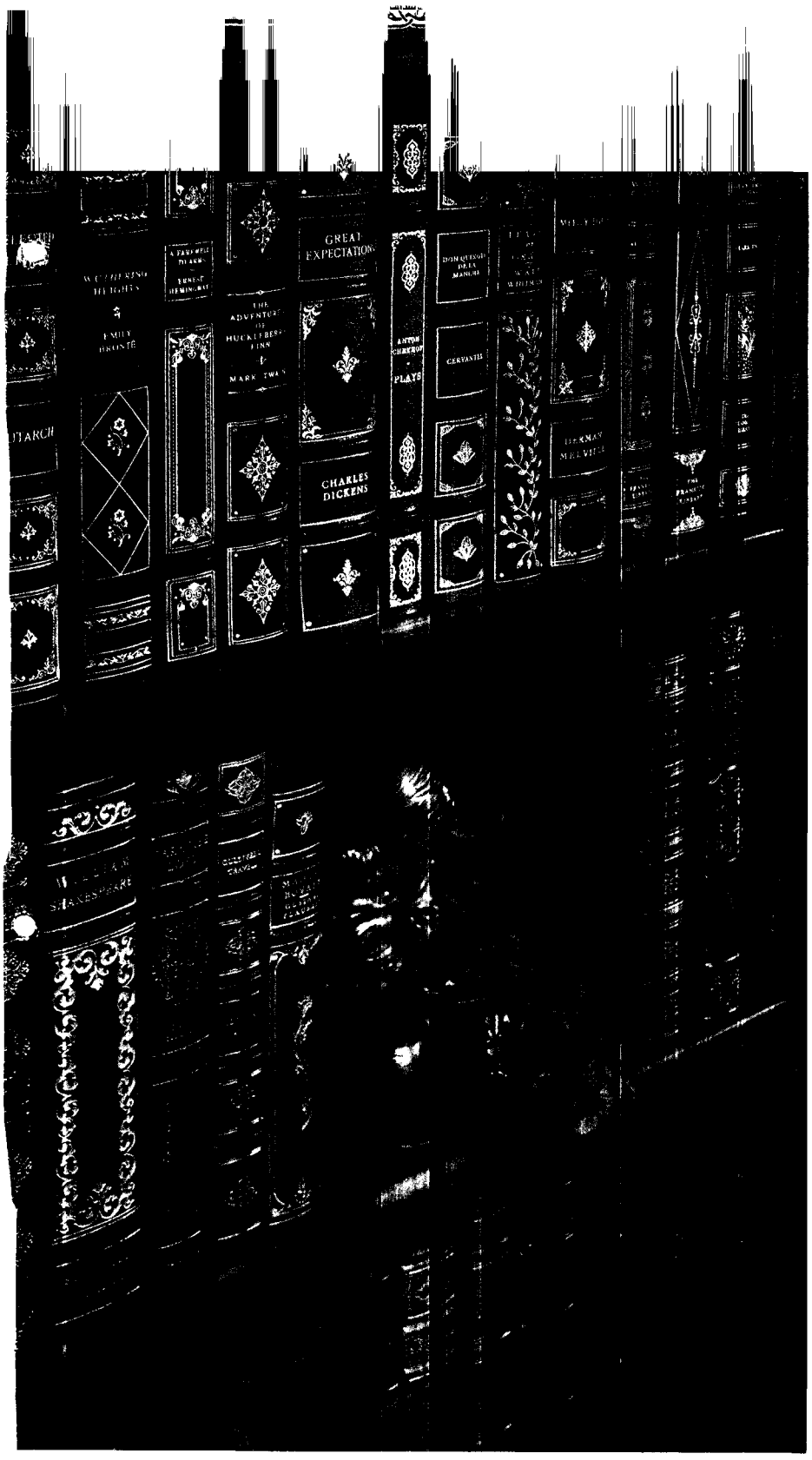

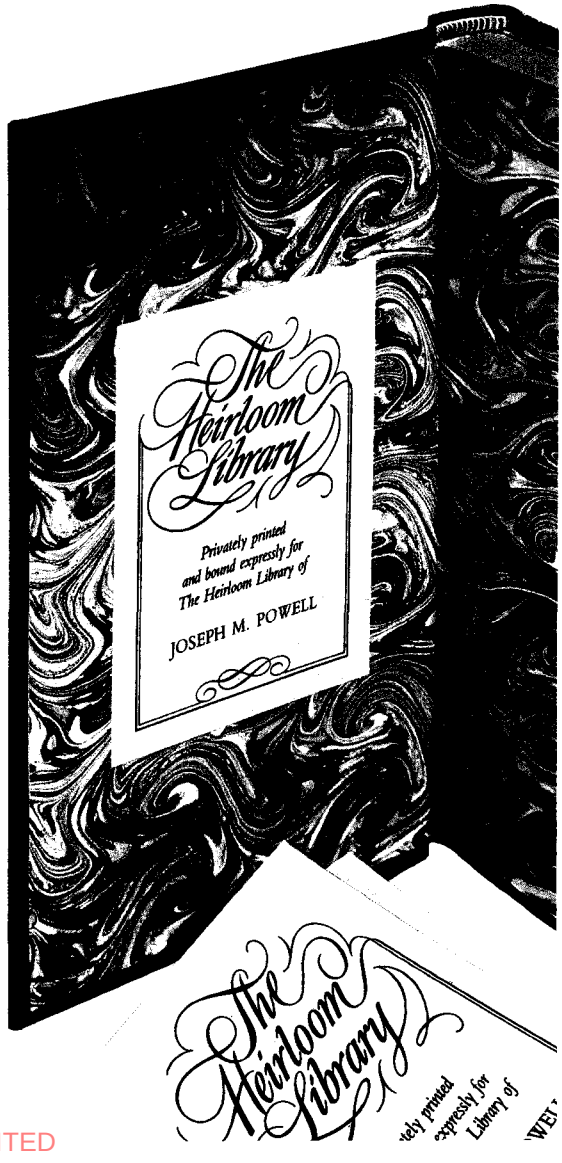
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have serious doubts that evolution has occurred. Distressing as this may be, the argument actually highlights the core issue raised by creationism. The creationists are acknowledging that science is no monolithic authoritarian belief system. But even though they recognize that there are competing ideas within contemporary biology, the creationists see scientific debate as a sign of weakness. Of course, it really is a sign of vitality.

Evolutionary theory since the 1940s (until comparatively recently) has focused on a single coherent view of the evolutionary process. Biologists of all disciplines agreed to a remarkable degree on the outlines of this theory, the so-called "modern synthesis." In a nutshell, this was a vindication of Darwin's original position: that evolution is predominantly an affair of gradual progressive change. As environmental conditions changed, natural selection (a culling process similar to the "artificial" selection practiced by animal breeders) favored those variants best suited to the new conditions. Thus evolutionary change is fundamentally adaptive. The modern synthesis integrated the newly arisen science of genetics with the Darwinian view and held that the entire diversity of life could be explained in these simple terms.

Some biologists have attacked natural selection itself, but much of the current uproar in evolutionary biology is less radical in implication. Some critics see a greater role for random processes. Others, like me, see little evidence of gradual, progressive change in the fossil record. We maintain that the usual explanation—the inadequacy of the fossil record—is itself inadequate to explain the non-change, the maintenance of status quo which lasts in some cases for 10 million years or more in our fossil bones and shells. In this view, change (presumably by natural selection causing adaptive modifications) takes place in bursts of a few thousand years, followed usually by immensely longer periods of business as usual.

Arguments become heated. Charges of "straw man," "no evidence," and so on are flung about—which shows that scientists, like everyone, get their egos wrapped up in their work. They believe passionately in their own ideas, even if they are supposed to be calm, cool, dispassionate, and able to evaluate all possibilities evenly. (It is usually in the collective process of argument that the better ideas win out in science; seldom has anyone single-handedly evinced the open-mindedness necessary to drop a pet idea). But nowhere in this *sturm und drang* has any of the participants come close to denying that evolution has occurred.

So the creationists distort. An attack on some parts of Darwin's views is equated with a rejection of evolution. They conveniently ignore that Darwin merely proposed one of many sets of ideas on *how* evolution works. The only real defense against such tactics lies in a true appreciation of the scientific enterprise—the trial-and-error comparison of ideas and how they seem to fit the material universe. If the public were more aware that scientists are expected to disagree, that what a scientist writes today is not the last word, but a progress report on some very intensive thinking and investigation, creationists would be far less successful in injecting an authoritarian system of belief into curricula supposedly devoted to free, open rational inquiry into the nature of natural things.

Whatever happened to 'Marxist terrorist' Mugabe?

So Far, So Fair in Zimbabwe

by Robert A. Manning

Salisbury

There they were in the hushed chambers of Zimbabwe's Parliament, the familiar-looking white man and black man sitting across the table quietly joking. Around them an orderly debate ensued over a piece of legislation, as an African magistrate in an absurd-looking white wig looked on. The white man was Ian Smith and the black man, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe.

Across the street later that day I sat in the Quill Club, the press drinking establishment, downing Zimbabwe Lagers with a white senior civil servant. "The night the election results were announced," he confessed, "we had our guns oiled and our bags packed. But then Mugabe went on TV and announced his policy of reconciliation and everyone decided to give it a chance. Strange bird; I still wonder what he's about."

Robert A. Manning is the Washington correspondent for the London-based magazines *Africa* and *The Middle East.*

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These two scenes dramatize the situation in Zimbabwe today—one that confounds ideologues of the left and right. Barely a year ago much of the press still referred to Robert Mugabe—an austere, articulate, and reserved man whose manner bears a Sunday school teacher resemblance to Jimmy Carter—as a "Marxist terrorist." But after a year of independence, the anticipated scenarios of massive white flight, economic chaos, tribal civil war, and descent into an African *gulag* have not occurred. To be sure, Zimbabwe today is far from undisturbed sweetness and light, as underscored by recent fighting outside Bulawayo which left at least 300 dead.

But after seven years of a bitter war that killed more than 20,000 and uprooted one of every eight Zimbabweans, the record of the past year is impressive. There is little feeling of retribution. Most of the tens of thousands of refugees who fled to neighboring Zambia and Mozambique have come home. Shops are filled and there are no queues for commodities. After registering zero economic growth in 1979, the last year of the conflict, Zimbabwe registered a growth rate of 10 percent for the past year, while inflation was a modest eight percent.

There is a steady flow of whites out of the country—about 1,000 a month. They include civil servants and military and police officers affected by the rapid Africanization that is under way. But shopkeepers, farmers, and many professionals appear able to live with the new government. Some 6,000 white farmers still produce 90 percent of Zimbabwe's corn, cotton, sugar, tea, coffee, and other crops, bringing in about one-third of all foreign revenues, and an official of the white Commercial Farmers Union said he was "quite confident" about the situation. In recent months some whites have begun to return. As one small farmer near Fort Victoria told me, "After I got to South Africa and looked around, I thought, 'I've already gone through this once; why do it again?'"

THE FUTURE of Zimbabwe's 220,000 whites is the key to the balancing act that the Mugabe government is trying to perform. How can it maintain stability and keep the country afloat, and still meet the expectations of Mugabe's black constituency? It is no easy task, and there is grumbling on all sides. Some whites understandably are disturbed to turn on the radio and hear, "Comrade Minister X today warned the racist South Africans. . . ." Ian Smith, now leader of the 20 whites in the 100-seat Parliament, has expressed much bitterness at policies such as the new education legislation that dismantles white privileges. But he conceded to me in an interview that "Mugabe is not such a bad fellow after all."

There is also frustration and disenchantment among blacks. At the top there have been drawn-out debates over major policy questions such as land redistribution, economic plans, and agricultural development. In Mugabe's cabinet there is no shortage of hardliners who take their Marxism seriously. So far, though, moderation has prevailed. It does not seem the result of "pragmatism," the fashionable cliché used to explain the Mugabe enigma, nor is it a Trojan horse designed to lure foreign aid and investment while Mugabe consolidates power and then unveils sweeping socialist measures.

FOR ALL BUT a tiny handful of intellectuals in Mugabe's ZANU-PF party, "Marxism" is a code word for general egalitarian goals for social change and a casting off of oppression, rather than a systematic ideology. Capitalism, on the other hand, is a symbol of white settlers, British colonialism, and the Western "imperialism" that supported it. Even Edgar Tekere, the fiery secretary-general of ZANU-PF who recently was demoted and stripped of his cabinet post by Mugabe, told me: "Marx never visited Zimbabwe nor ran a government. If I had to summarize what we mean by socialism, I would say it is people-oriented policies."

It is true that one frequently hears ZANU-PF officials referring to the present period as the "national democratic phase" of the revolution, with more socialism to come when the conditions are "ripe." But the caution and patience exercised by Mugabe already have begun to push his government into patterns that are much easier to get into than out of. Mugabe's behavior is not difficult to understand. ZANU-PF inherited one of the most sophisticated and diversified economies in Africa. It also had the negative example of neighboring guerrilla movements to guide it, especially that of Mozambique, which is still paying the economic price for its overnight nationalizations. Mugabe obviously has drawn on his experience as an exile there, and also on the advice of Mozambican president Samora Machel, who has backtracked and is looking at the virtues of small-scale private enterprise.

Whatever course Mugabe decides upon, his choices are limited by the Lancaster House agreements pushed through by Britain's Lord Carrington and by the inheritance of a lopsided economy serving the interests of three percent of the population and still dominated by foreign companies. The Lancaster House agreements require paying the pensions of civil servants, "adequate and fair compensation" for any land redistributed to blacks, and reimbursing South Africa about $500 million for the war debt incurred by the Smith government. More fundamentally, black Zimbabweans control only about 12 percent of the economy while foreign firms provide 88 percent of the jobs and 95 percent of the output in the mining and manufacturing sectors. Mining and industry are dominated by British, South African, and American firms in roughly equal proportion. The British conglomerate Lonrho and the South African behemoth Anglo-American are among the most ubiquitous.

So far the Mugabe government's policies have been

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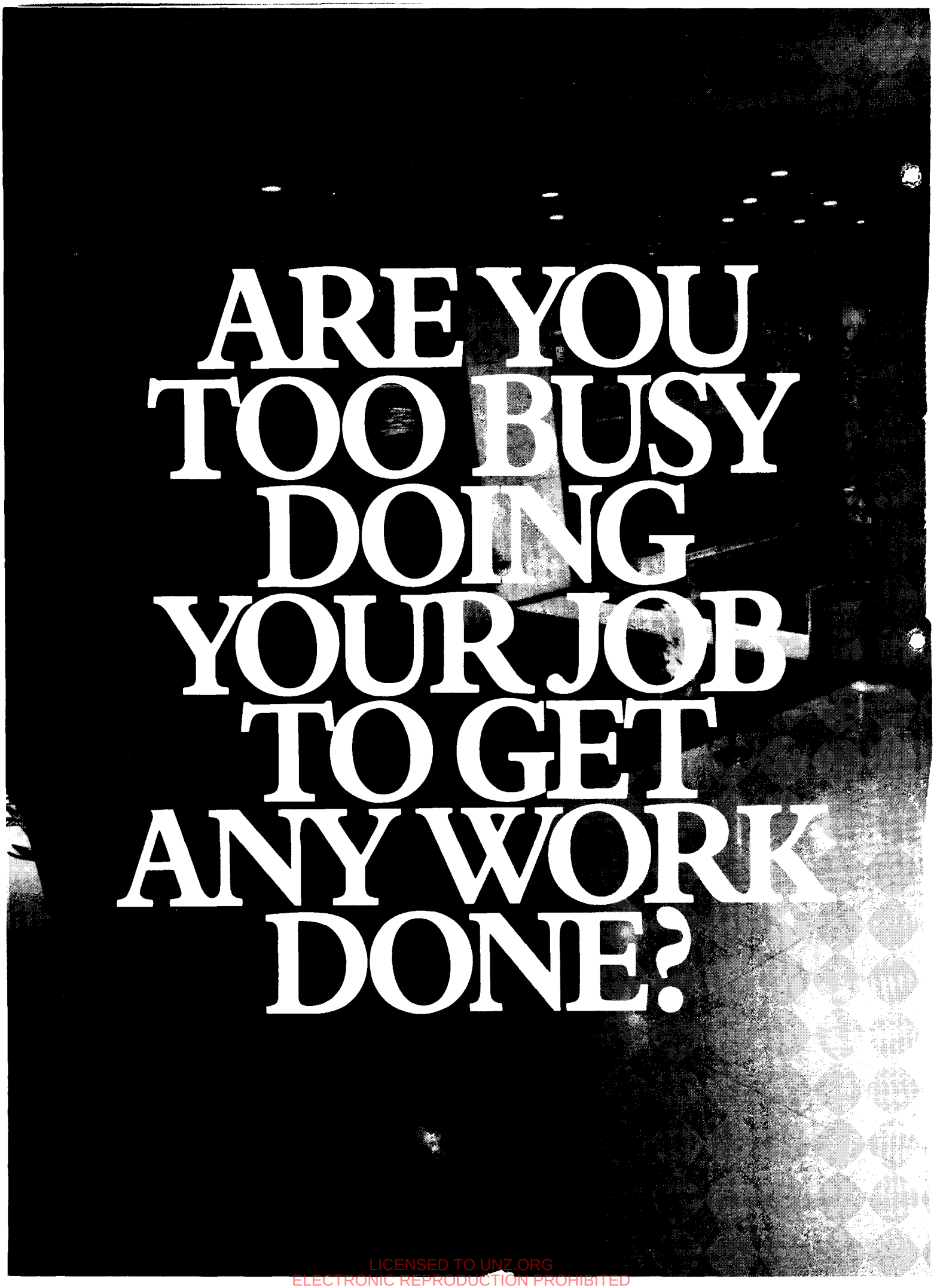

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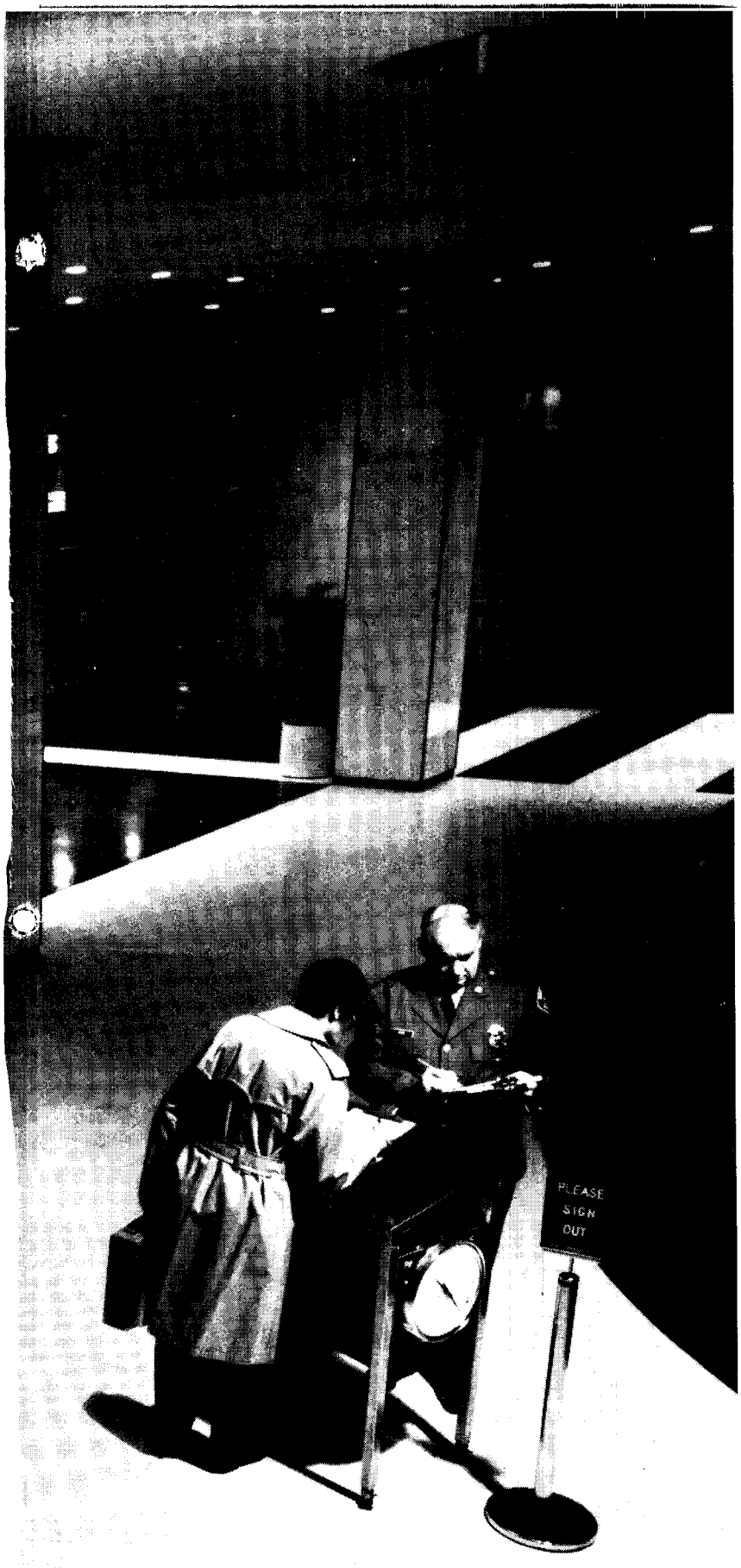

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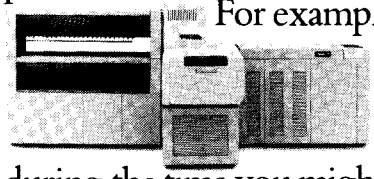

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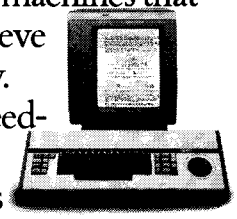

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influenced heavily by foreign-educated—often well-heeled—technocrats who returned home after independence. One of these is Bernard Chidzero, minister of economic planning, formerly a distinguished UN economist. Although not even a member of the ZANU-PF Central Committee, he is a cabinet minister, much to the chagrin of leftists in the party elite. Under the government's new economic plan, only modest measures are being taken to improve conditions for the country's seven million blacks. The minimum wages for domestic, industrial, and agricultural workers (38 percent of all employees work on white-owned farms) have been increased slightly to about $95 per month for agricultural workers and about $130 per month for urban workers. Some 23,000 small African farmers have received government loans. But even these modest measures have heated up the economy—cutting exports, increasing consumer demand and inflation, and leading Mugabe to begin talking to the International Monetary Fund for balance-of-payments help.

There is a steady flow of foreign corporate executives into Salisbury—including those of the Bank of America, which is bullish on Zimbabwe—and the foreign investment code is liberal. It allows companies to repatriate 50 percent of profits after two years. Of the four banks that dominate the economy, the government has taken control only of Rhobank—by buying shares owned by South Africans.

The new economic plan presumes an eight percent annual growth rate between 1981 and 1984. During this time the government hopes to invest $7.4 billion. More than half of this sum would be invested by the private sector, thus ensuring a mixed economy for the near future. Certainly the economic blueprint, titled "Growth with Equity," is peppered with phrases such as ending "imperialist exploitation," and Chidzero did say recently that his goal is "to establish an egalitarian and socialist society under democratic conditions." But in Africa "socialism" means different things to different people. One of the great ironies here, unnoticed outside the country, is that the white minority regime had developed a substantial state sector—consisting of marketing boards, electricity, communications, air, and rail companies, and even an industrial development corporation—which comprises one-third of Zimbabwe's economic activity. With a slight altering of those institutions' priorities, Mugabe might claim that Zimbabwe was well on the road to socialism.

Some of the government's bolder moves include the decisions to set up a mineral and mining marketing board to gain control over the sale of natural resources, and the purchase of the country's major newspapers from the South African Argus chain. The former has ruffled the feathers of mining executives, but will not chase them out. The latter was made possible by money provided from Nigeria. The Western press portrayed the purchase as a "takeover" of the media to conform to the party line, but in fact a Press Trust has been set up to oversee the management of the major papers, which is certainly not yet a government organ. The papers carried first-rate coverage of the fighting in Bulawayo, including detailed accounts which did not please the Ministry of Information. A front-page story from a Western wire agency criticized Cuba's role in the non-aligned movement. And most striking was a page-two story reporting a speech by Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Davis Mugabe, a former CUNY professor, warning of the dangers of a new black elite that might dominate the country.

The moves by the Mugabe government generally have been so cautious that pressure has been building from below. Several hundred secondary school children marched through downtown Salisbury one morning demanding more support from the government. And in the rural areas, where Mugabe's party had mobilized a large base of support during the war, grassroots pressure is mounting, particularly on the crucial land question.

LAND IS PERHAPS the single most important issue of the entire conflict. Whites, who comprise three percent of the population, have half the land, while Africans have the other half. But even those figures are deceptive. The best land has been reserved for whites, with the remainder parceled out to the overcrowded Tribal Trust Lands. A 1978 report by the Smith government conceded that the TTLs could adequately hold 200,000 families. They now hold 675,000 families. At the same time, 60 percent of the white-owned land is either unused or underused, and is often held in speculation. At least three million acres are available for purchase, but so far the government has purchased and redistributed only several hundred thousand acres. There are frequent incidents of Africans squatting on white lands, which the government has reluctantly supported.

The Mugabe government has agonized over the land issue for months. Mugabe told me that he considered the failure of Britain and the US to provide funds for resettlement to be "a breach of the Lancaster House accords." Although no precise figures were committed, both Washington and London made pledges during the negotiations, and Mugabe pointed out that in the original Kissinger plan in 1976 figures in the area of $1.5 billion were mentioned. Britain has pledged $180 million over the next few years. The US has provided $50 million so far, and the Reagan administration has promised $225 million over the next three years. This has caused resentment and bitterness in Zimbabwe. When I pressed Mugabe about what he would do if insufficient funds came in, he said

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emphatically, "We can not allow land to lie fallow when our people are clamoring for land." A major decision is expected after the 45-nation donors conference in March, through which the government has sought to raise two billion dollars.

DURING A DISCUSSION between a top official in the agriculture ministry and a group of reporters, a reporter asked if Zimbabwe would emulate Tanzania's *ujaama* model of collectivization. The British-educated official laughed and said, "Why should we copy a failure? We know coercion doesn't work. Cooperatives are encouraged but only on a voluntary basis." Zimbabwe already has an impressive agricultural sector, and Mugabe is making rural development a top priority. Government officials are predicting a corn surplus of over a million tons. The record crop is due partly to good weather, but also to the decision encouraged by white agriculture minister Dennis Norman to increase payments to farmers by 50 percent, which gave them an incentive to plant more acreage. Now neighboring countries such as Zambia, Mozambique, and Tanzania, which would have had to import corn from South Africa, have been canceling orders and queueing up to buy Zimbabwe corn. Ironically, white farmers are putting South Africa out of business.

Despite the many bright prospects on both the economic and political fronts, problems abound. There is still an unemployment rate of about 20 percent, which is obvious when one strolls through African townships in any of the major urban areas. But the most pressing problems are political. Nice-sounding ideals aside, Mugabe's ZANU-PF is essentially a Shona-dominated party. Shona-speakers (there are several Shona subgroups) comprise about 80 percent of the population. The other 20 percent are Ndebele. Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU (now called the Patriotic Front) has worked for years to achieve ethnic balance, but finds its constituency primarily in Matabeleland, in the western part of the country. It is there that Nkomo won all his seats in Parliament. The ethnic rivalry is longstanding and characterized more by personal and historical antagonisms than by ideological feuds. Nkomo, the Grand Old Man of Zimbabwean nationalist politics, has had difficulty accepting defeat, just as in general the Ndebele have trouble accepting their status as a permanent minority. This explains the problems in integrating some 37,000 guerrillas into the national army. But as Nathan Shamiyura, the Princeton-educated minister of information, told me, "It's remarkable how few incidents we have had. When you have 37,000 men with guns outside the national army in any country, you will have problems." The problems have been compounded by the fact that many soldiers have been sitting idle in assembly points for almost a year.

Mugabe is aware that he must integrate the Ndebeles into the new power structure. Thus far he has been wooing Nkomo men in top positions, and to a lesser extent appears to be using patronage to win over the opposition. Talks about a merger between the two parties continue as they have for several years. But one way or another, signs already are appearing of a drift toward a one-party state. The ZANU-PF party machine is in place throughout the country, particularly from Salisbury eastward. Elections for district committees have been held and often the only candidates were ZANU-PF people. These committees are gradually replacing the role of the district commissioners, the white civil servants who administer the 56 districts.

The drift toward a one-party state has less to do with Marxism than with Africanization. The pattern can be seen in African states of varying ideological persuasions. A sort of African hybrid of social democracy is taking shape that may not square with European models, but it is more apt to resemble social and political structures in Sweden (perhaps with a touch of Yugoslavia thrown in) than in the Soviet Union or China.

Undoubtedly trade with socialist countries will increase, but Zimbabwe is tightly woven into the Western economic system and no efforts to disengage are evident. One Western businessman predicted that "within the next decade Salisbury will be a major financial center for the region."

CONTINUING instability in southern Africa has increased the tendency to view the region in East-West terms. Nowhere is this less applicable than in Zimbabwe. The Soviets have backed Nkomo from the beginning, and Mugabe officials have few good words to say about Moscow. In private, their disdain is vehement. I was amazed when one cabinet-level official said vindictively, "The Russians are opportunists about southern Africa. Why do you think Angola and Mozambique lack the anti-aircraft hardware to prevent all these South African raids?" He went on to say that the Soviets "want the conflict to drag out. That way the West looks bad and they look good, so they orchestrate their aid."

Zimbabwe, with its strategic minerals and location, is pursuing a course of non-alignment equidistant from both superpowers. The US was the first country to open an embassy. Moscow recently reached agreement with Mugabe to exchange ambassadors. The Soviets had been pressing for state-to-state relations with Mugabe—with the caveat that they maintain party-to-party ties with Nkomo. Mugabe didn't let them in until they dropped that demand.

There are important lessons to be learned from the Zimbabwe experiment. Before embarking on a new tilt toward the apartheid regime in South Africa and a confrontationist approach to the region by sending aid to UNITA guerrillas in Angola, the Reagan administration would do well to take a long, hard look at Zimbabwe. Negotiation has worked there.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Past Masters

All through *City of Women* I kept wondering what had been going through Federico Fellini's mind while he was making it. That's an unorthodox way to view a film—Intentional Fallacy is only one of the canonical errors—but a few directors are so close to me that I feel personally involved in their new films. Some of their past works are so tightly knitted into my experience and fantasy that I can't escape a proprietary, even nervous feeling when a new film by one of them comes along. Bergman and Antonioni and Kurosawa are three such: Fellini, too, though his record is much less consistently high than the others. Still, the man who made *I Vitelloni*, *The Temptation of Dr. Antonio*, 8½, and *Amarcord* belongs to me, and I can't help worrying about him, in intrusive, noncritical ways.

So with this latest film I couldn't help puzzling how he had made choices from day to day, hour to hour. *City of Women* is quite poor—at least as poor as *Orchestra Rehearsal* and without even the tiny asset of the last film's symbolism—an attempt at the harmony of music that ended in chaos. But it's not the inferiority of *City* that distressed me most: what good artist has always worked well? (Look at later Picasso.) Besides, quality is not always best judged by the maker; many an artist has preferred works of his that the world ranks otherwise. No, what baffled me was, not why Fellini didn't see that the film wasn't very good but that he didn't recognize its familiarity, didn't know how much he was repeating himself.

Before some details on that point, a word on the structure. *City of Women* is schizoid. Part One is set in a huge luxe country hotel full of women—feminists, mostly young, variously caricatured—into which the tail-chasing Marcello Mastroianni stumbles. Well, not exactly stumbles: he gets off a train at Fregene (where Fellini has a house, by the way) to follow a Junoesque woman into the woods, and she leads him to the hotel. After a lot of humiliating tricks played by the women on the middle-aged, ludicrously lecherous Mastroianni, the film shifts gears. He wanders into the fantastically palatial home-and-harem of a middle-aged stud called, in the subtitles, Dr. Züberkock. (His name in Italian is Cazzone, which translates, without equivocation, as supercock.) After some more adventures in that house, whose atmosphere is the reverse of the hotel, Mastroianni moves into a mélange of personal memories.

The film ends where it began, in Mastroianni's railway compartment. The whole picture has been—I can hardly bear to write this—a dream. And Fellini tries for a last quasi-metaphysical twist by having three women of the dream come into the compartment after Mastroianni wakes.

The first part, the luxe hive full of nothing but queen bees, has an odd reverse-flow stylistic effect. It kept reminding me of Lina Wertmüller (also the stud's palace), and Wertmüller began her career as assistant to Fellini. More: the brutal, aggressive, castration-implying behavior of some of the women has suggestions of Bertrand Blier's *Femmes Fatales*. Through these early sections could Fellini not have known all this? Could he have been unaware of echoes re-echoed?

Concede that possibility, and the last long section is still a very different matter. It's less a stroll down Mastroianni's Memory Lane, as presented, than down Fellini's. Some items: a beach, with a view of the sea; on the beach, some boys peeping at the body of a woman; Mastroianni's use of expletives from comic-strip balloons; a sexual advance by a homely woman who exposes her gargantuan bosom at him; his cool wife visiting him in the midst of madness; fragments of vaudeville; a mass of people out of Mastroianni's past coming down a flight of steps at him; a shot looking directly down on him, floating high in the air; escape from women by ascent into the sky. You could list those items on an exam in Fellini, and ask the student to match them up with 8½, *Juliet of the Spirits*, or *Amarcord*. How, I kept wondering, could Fellini not know he was duplicating and that, by duplicating, he was diminishing?

There's an additional burr. Analysis of Fellini films in Jungian or Freudian terms is plentiful, and a bit of it has even been helpful. Fellini seems to have read some of it and has taken it on himself to put in Jungian/Freudian clues instead of concentrating on the work and leaving the inferences to others. He uses a lot of long dark corridors with light at the end, he repeats often the device of Mastroianni on a winding children's playground slide, he opens and closes the film with his camera on the front of a locomotive heading for a tunnel. (Hitchcockians will spy a reference here.)

In some of Fellini's post-*Dolce Vita* fumbles, he has at least partially compensated with unique visual invention and spectacle, with staggering/witty costume and design and composition and color. Very little of that in *City of Women*. Dante Ferretti, the designer, is not as striking as Danilo Donati, who was not in the same class as the late great Piero Gherardi. And the music by Luis Bacalov is stratospheres below what the late Nino Rota used to supply for Fellini. I'll remember only a few bits

Films Worth Seeing

Kagemusha. Kurosawa's grand, formal, gorgeous "dance" of war in 16th-century Japan. The term "epic" made clear.

Nine Months. A young Hungarian woman struggles for selfhood in a society supposedly egalitarian. Lili Monori is wonderful.

Oblomov. A good Soviet version of Goncharov's great novel. Slightly untidy, but with much of the needed, lovely dreaminess.

Raging Bull. A prizefight film for those who hate prizefight films. Full of the fury peculiar to American cities. Robert De Niro splendid.

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from this film: the photograph gallery of women in Züberkock's home, with a switch under each picture that turns on the voice of the woman in sexual moments; or the pitch-black screen out of which the lights of a huge amusement park suddenly snap. Slim pickings for a 138-minute film.

I thought I had a rule of thumb about Fellini: that, after *La Dolce Vita*, the good films were those about memory—*8½*, *Amarcord*, much of *The Clowns*; but that thumb is now fractured along with its rule. *City of Women* is filled with reworkings and leftovers of memory, in a context of self-mockery that is itself histrionic and insincere, nothing like Guido's in *8½*. Is it really possible that, in all the months of preparation of this film, Fellini could not have known that he was rehashing?

Recently I went to see *Attila*, an early opera by one of my heroes in art, Giuseppe Verdi. I thought *Attila* very weak, with little hint in it of the Verdi to come, which was surprising because even earlier Verdi, *Nabucco* and *Ernani*, seem stronger and more prophetic of the giant en route.

Recently I went to see *The Lady without Camellias*, an early film by Michelangelo Antonioni. I thought *Lady* very weak, with little hint in it of the Antonioni to come, which was surprising because even earlier Antonioni, *Story of a Love* (*TNR*, April 19, 1975), seemed stronger and more prophetic of the giant en route.

I had seen *Lady* once before, at the 1965 New York Film Festival, and thought it feeble. (It's Antonioni's third film, made in 1953. *Story* was made in 1951; then he made a three-episode film, *I Vinti*, which I've never seen.) *Lady* has just now been given its American theatrical premiere by Film at the Public, a branch of the Papp complex. And now it looks feebler than it did in 1965, not because of Antonioni's masterpieces, which are some of the paramount artworks of our age, but because I've since seen the first film. *Lady* is a trite script about a salesgirl who becomes a film star, gets notions of grandeur, makes an ambitious flop, then sinks back into sleazy pictures. Connected with this action are the stories of a marriage that she ruins and a lover who deserts her.

The script is flat as tinware, the acting bearably routine except for the star Lucia Bosè, who is unbearably routine. It's said that Antonioni wanted Gina Lollobrigida or Sophia Loren for the role, either of whom would at least have given the picture some personal sparkle, which now it has not. I don't understand the title: the heroine is not a modern courtesan, simply a lucky nonentity who takes some time to realize the extent of her luck. The big disappointment is the visual barrenness of the picture; Antonioni himself said that the camerawork was "more orthodox" than in his first film. One moment only is out of the ordinary: the first shot. From above we see Bosè walking idly back and forth on the curb of a street at night. She does this under the credits; with the last credit, she suddenly turns and goes into the film theater in front of which she has been waiting, goes in to see the last minute of the film in which she is starring . . . an angle and an action that interest us, that lead to a point, and that launch the story. But it's not much of a story.

Charles Michener on photography

The Struggle to Live With Reality

The fact that photography remains, as Paul Strand observed, "the first and only important contribution thus far, of science to the arts," is at once its special glory and Achilles heel. In Beaumont Newhall's splendidly chosen and illustrated new anthology of writings (including Strand's) about the medium, *Photography: Essays and Images* (The Museum of Modern Art, $29.95), we are reminded of this from the very beginning. William Henry Fox Talbot in 1839 described his pioneering discoveries in the field in an essay whose title says it all: "Some Account of the Art of Photogenic Drawing, or, The Process by Which Natural Objects May Be Made to Delineate Themselves without the Aid of the Artist's Pencil."

There it is: the recognition of photography's dependence on nature followed by the implied boast that *it* could succeed where painting and sculpture had failed—that is, free the eye from its dependence on the hand. From Fox Talbot to the transcript of a discussion between Walker Evans and some college students in 1971, the tale of this volume (Newhall aptly calls it "an autobiography of the art of photography") is that of an upstart's never-ending identity crisis. In 1853, for example, Sir William J. Newton kicked up a storm by advising members of the Photographic Society of London to put the subject "a little *out of focus*, thereby giving a greater breadth of effect." This sort of self-assertiveness threw Baudelaire into a famous rage: "If photography is allowed to supplement art in some of its functions," he wrote in 1859,

> it will soon have supplanted or corrupted it altogether, thanks to the stupidity of the multitude which is its natural ally. It is time, then, for it to return to its true duty, which is to be the servant of the sciences and arts—but the very humble servant, like printing or shorthand, which have neither created nor supplemented literature.

By 1870, the great Boston daguerreotypist Albert Sands Southworth, whose 1848 "Self-Portrait" may be the finest depiction ever made of the agony and the ecstasy of a photographer, was fanatically celebrating Baudelaire's worst fears. Though mindful that "into the practice of no other business or art was there ever such an absurd, blind, and pell-mell rush," Southworth exhorted the faithful at a meeting of the National Photographic Association in Cleveland to aspire, at the very least, to a symbiotic footing with nature:

> The artist is conscious of something beside the mere physical in every object in nature. He feels its expression, he sympathises with its character, he is impressed with its language; his heart, mind, and soul are stirred in its contemplation. It is the life, the feeling, the mind, the soul of the subject itself.

In 1921 that ideal had been not only attained but surpassed—at least according to the novelist and music critic Paul Rosenfeld, who wrote of Alfred Stieglitz's photographs:

> Out of the forms and textures of the myriad humdrum objects, the myriad

Charles Michener, senior editor at *Newsweek*, will be writing a regular photography column for *TNR*.

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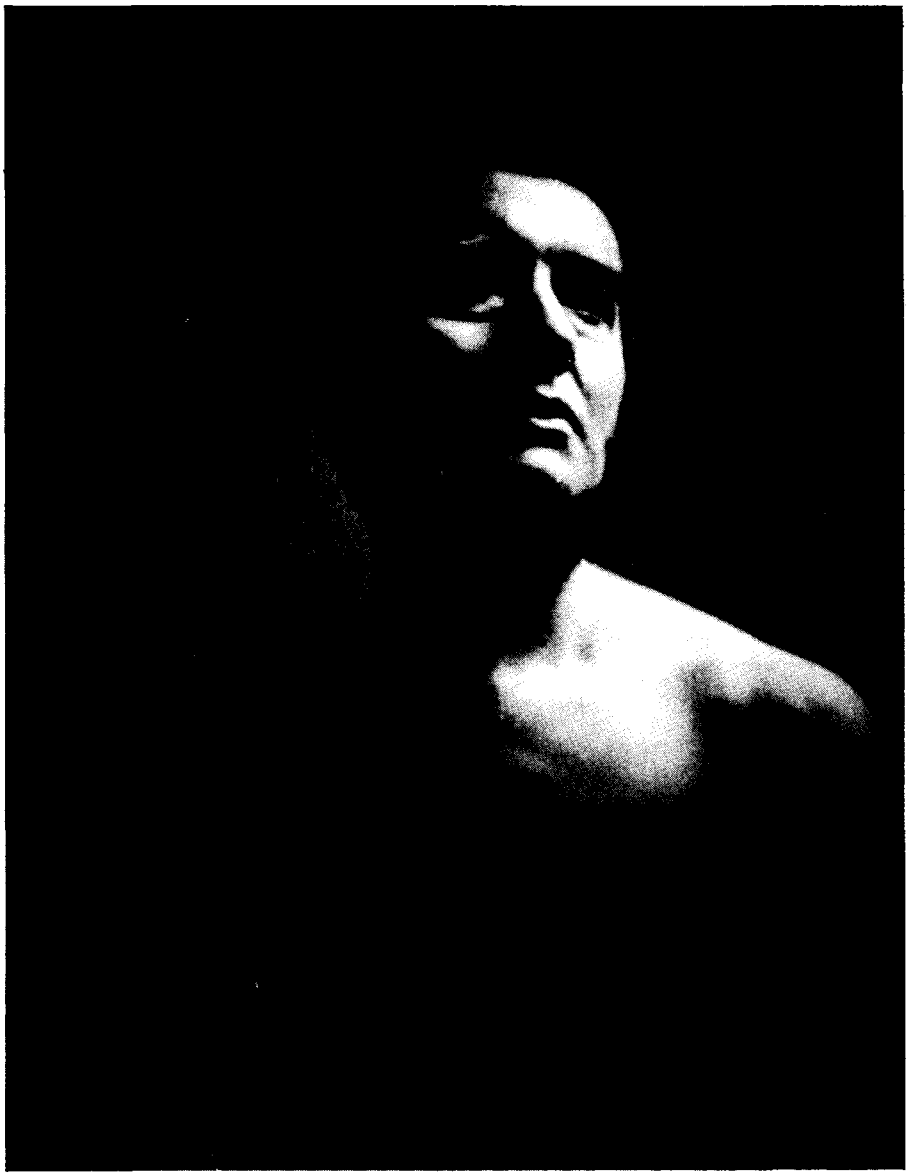

Albert Sands Southworth, "Self-Portrait," ca. 1848. From *Photography: Essays & Images.*

> confused objects attacked by the lens, there has been made an expression ideal as is music; an order as pure, as complete, as that of Cézanne or of any of the great masters of the aesthetic pictural organization.

And so the Rubicon was crossed: photography had invaded the high country of Art, never to turn back, and since then its footing with nature has been very slippery indeed. Over and over again, we hear photographers explaining how they keep their balance. From Brassaï, the most impish of intruders on nature: "I invent nothing, I imagine everything." From the mystical Minor White, on why it is necessary to develop a "sturdy" technique: "[so] that I can photograph without thought . . . [so that I can] put my act of photographing at the service of an outside power. So that when I photograph, an outside (or inside) power may leave its thumbprint." And finally, from Walker Evans:

> If I'm satisfied that something transcendent shows in a photograph I've done, that's it. It's there, I've done it. Without being able to explain, I know it absolutely, that it happens sometimes, and I know by the way I feel in the action that it goes like magic—this is it.

Evans was talking about trying to achieve the impossible: photography, which is made of—and by—light, cannot "transcend" nature, it *is* nature. But trying to achieve the impossible is what makes art exciting, and photography becomes exciting (on an artistic level) only when it manages to seem transcendent—when it becomes more "real" than reality. Time, however, plays even more tricks with photography than it does with painting. We tend to confer the status of "classic" much more quickly on the former than on the latter, but often what appeared a transcendent image on first sight is seen, years later, as either the charming relic of a lost moment or as an image whose "timelessness" looks contrived. A casualty of the first kind is Alfred Eisenstadt, whose pictures of Germany between the wars, currently on view at the International Center of Photography in New York, mostly cry out for the magazine captions that originally accompanied them. A casualty of the second kind is W. Eugene Smith, a photojournalist with at least a few images of permanent transcendence to his credit. Removed from their original photo-essay context in *Life* magazine to the walls of the new Photograph Gallery on Fifth Avenue, many of Smith's most "searing" images of death, war, and noble servitude now have all the punch of bravura movie stills.

Two photographers whose pictures have gained in poetic intensity with the passage of time are the subject of a fascinating exhibition organized by Tod Papageorge, a professor of photography at Yale University. (On view at the Yale University Art Gallery from January 21 to March 15, the show reopens at the Daniel Wolf Gallery in New York on March 30, where it will run until April 25.) "Walker Evans and Robert Frank: An Essay on Influence," as the show and its fine accompanying catalogue are called, is the sort of event that happens too seldom in photography—a tightly focused exhibit built around a single, provocative idea.

Papageorge's stated purpose—"to describe the influence of Walker Evans's *American Photographs* (1938) on *The Americans* (1959) of Robert Frank"—is hardly audacious. Frank, after all, has always acknowledged his debt to Evans, and the two have long been discussed in father/son terms—the old, classical, cool order of Evans giving way to the new, romantic, hot messiness of Frank (and his followers like Gary Winogrand, Bruce Davidson, Lee Friedlander, etc.). It is no revelation that much of this stereotyped distinction still holds. Papageorge has selected 50 prints from *American Photographs* and *The Americans* (using the more tightly, intensely cropped pictures in the first edition of Frank's book) and matched them in pairs to demonstrate his thesis that "to a significant degree, Frank used Evans's work as an iconographical sourcebook."

In one of the show's most fertile juxtapositions, for example, we go from Evans's famous picture of a 1931 hearse, parked with propriety in front of a

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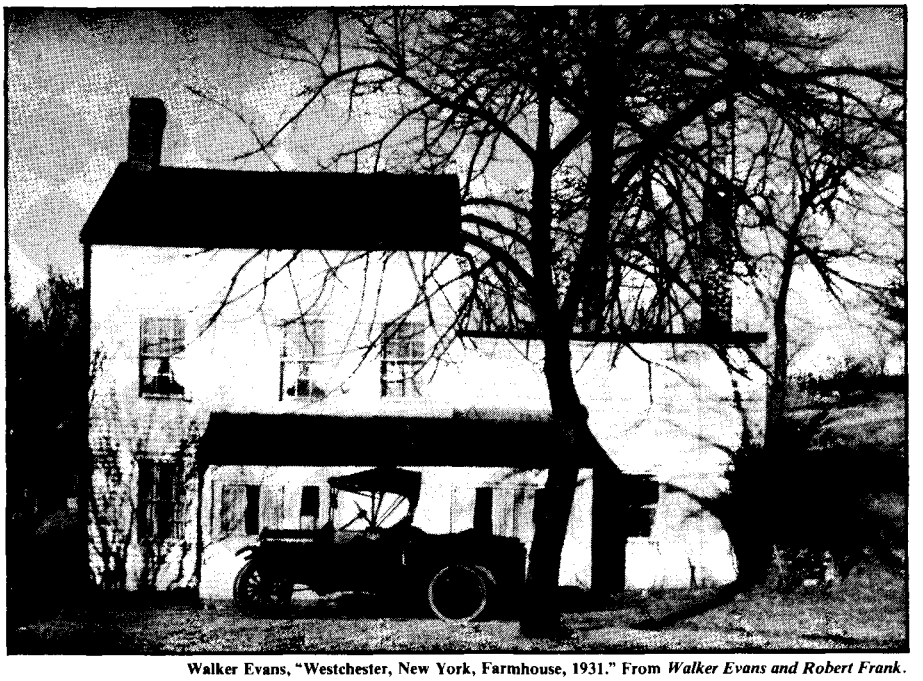

Walker Evans, "Westchester, New York, Farmhouse, 1931." From *Walker Evans and Robert Frank*.

white clapboard New York farmhouse, to Frank's equally famous shot of a 1956 car in Long Beach, California, covered entirely by a sheet, parked in front of a tacky, faceless building and two lurid palm trees. Evans's picture epitomizes everything for which he has been celebrated: the frontal, almost clinical, quietly ironic view of an American scene that sadly seems, as Lincoln Kirstein wrote in his brilliant afterword to *American Photographs*, on the brink of "imminent collapse." (Note the awkward, stuck-on additions to the original farmhouse.) Frank's picture does the same for him: the brooding, ominous view of an ugly American curiosity (a car wrapped like a corpse!), in which we are made to feel the invisible presence of a highly-charged observer, contemplating another example of an utterly thoughtless culture. ("America is not a photogenic country," the Swiss immigrant Frank once remarked. "It's a cold-looking country. There's nothing except cemeteries here.")

And the juxtapositions sharpen the familiar personal outlines of both men. Here, in bold relief, is Evans, the American returned from Paris (the Paris of Baudelaire's ghost and Atget), finding Cubism in the flesh-and-stone-and-glass landscapes of a New York street, applying a Schwitters-like sense of collage to the detail of a peeling minstrel showbill. Next to this aesthete's dispassion, Frank's saving sense of awe, his foreigner's wonder at the theatrical rawness of America, emerges more powerfully than ever.

Yet ultimately the show is most revealing about what the two photographers shared. "In a general sense," writes Papageorge, "these comparisons are meant to remind us that the true shape of influence is one composed of feelings as well as conscious recognition, and, more particularly, to suggest that Frank found in Evans's work not only a guide to what he might photograph in America, but a vision of how he might understand what he saw here." For all that has been written about both men as great "documentarians," the vision Frank learned from Evans's earlier book—the strategy he adopted to photograph nature while at the same time "transcend" it—was that of a Symbolist.

It seems to have been a lesson learned from hints. For Evans was no avowed Symbolist—not even a maker of what Stieglitz called "equivalents." Nonetheless, his images are so rigorously and luminously *described* by the act of picture-taking—an act registered as the fruit of contemplation rather than of an intuitive snapping of the shutter—that they point toward what Frank wanted to achieve. Frank's aim, he wrote in the Guggenheim Fellowship that supported "The Americans," was "to produce an authentic contemporary document; the visual impact should be such as will nullify explanation"—in other words, an impact, such as Evans had achieved, far beyond that of mere social criticism. (A few years before his death in 1975, Evans took some pains to clarify his standing as a "documentary photographer": "The term," he said, "should be *documentary style*. An example of a literal document would be a police photograph of a murder scene. You see, a document has use, whereas art is really useless. Therefore, art is never a document, though it can certainly adopt a style.")

It was Frank's genius to have capitalized on what was implicit in Evans's work—and, for that matter, in the equally great precursive work of Cartier-Bresson, whose pictures on the run may have influenced Frank more than he cared to admit. Frank complained that the French photographer was cold and too interested in sheer beauty, but it may have been the case of a young, romantically inclined European sensibility trying to define itself in the shadow of an older, more classical European sensibility. Frank, after all, had been shooting menial fashion lay-

Robert Frank, "Covered Car—Long Beach, California, 1956." From *Walker Evans and Robert Frank*.

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outs for *Harper's Bazaar* in the late 1940s, exactly the period when that magazine was commissioning photo essays on the postwar American scene by Cartier-Bresson—mostly forgotten projects that produced some startlingly "Frank-like" shots of Americans on highways and park benches.

If Evans made icons of reality, Cartier-Bresson made drama. Frank did both—and with a romantic, subjective attack that placed him right on the edge of falling into the picture. "It is always the instantaneous reaction to oneself that produces a photograph," he once said, and in his well-known picture of a barber shop in South Carolina, shot through a screen door, he even allowed his own shadow to cast a "cloud" over the eloquently empty barber chair.

AFTER a yeasty show like "Evans/Frank," it is dispiriting to stroll through the photography gallery at the Whitney Museum's biennial exhibition of what is supposedly the best in current American art. For in the Whitney's view, what's happening in serious photography is that old identity crisis—raging in full bloom; only now, however, the challenge is not to transcend nature but to compete with every new trend in contemporary painting. The keynote is struck by the ever restless Duane Michaels, who has taken up a paintbrush to fill out half of his "photographs." Jan Groover has been honored for her exquisitely printed print, "Untitled #275," which shows a sour-faced man staring straight ahead with his fingers pressed into his cheeks. Sandy Skoglund has been singled out for fantasies like "Radioactive Cats," which shows a beaten-down old couple dressed in gun-metal gray, at home in a gun-metal gray kitchen with cats that have been painted a fluorescent shade of green. Jo Ann Callis has been chosen for such still lifes as that of a stuffed parrot looking at a toy sailboat floating in a bathtub next to a bar of Ivory soap. And so on into the never-never lands of minimal, maximal, conceptual, pattern, "dumb," and all the other self-conscious art trends of our time. Except for Skoglund's playful, surreal tableaux, the only images anyone is likely to take home are those of an over-sophisticated generation of photographers sitting in their studios, surrounded by the latest technological advances in the making of color pictures, and trying desperately to think of something to photograph.

Much of this reflects the inevitable reaction to the post-Frank predominance of socially concerned photographers. And much of it reflects the Whitney's bias for photography that looks as much like poor cousins of current painting as possible. But there is enough of it here to cause dismay. Having given up nature for the playground of contemporary art, these photographers have abandoned the struggle in which Evans and Frank triumphantly engaged—the struggle to live with reality that is the unique excitement of photography.

A Poetics of Power

Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali by Clifford Geertz

(Princeton University Press; $17.50, $5.95 paper)

In the special bicentennial program of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences to be held in May, the lead speaker on behalf of the social sciences will be Professor Clifford Geertz of the Institute of Advanced Study at Princeton University. This provides some indication of the high regard in which the author of *Negara* is held by academic colleagues. His new book can only enhance that reputation.

Geertz explicitly addresses himself to several kinds of readers, and this produces an unusual format. The book is quite short, less than 300 pages in all, but fewer than half of these are devoted to the book proper. These are written in ordinary narrative discourse and can be read with understanding by anyone who possesses some degree of scholarly sophistication. The argument calls for only a modest knowledge of Indonesian history and only a bare-bones understanding of anthropological theory. The other half of the book is for the expert. It consists of notes, glossary, and bibliography, which add up to a specialized scholarly apparatus designed both to justify and to comment upon the arguments which are taken for granted in the main text.

From both points of view Geertz earns full marks. He once described the task of the anthropologist as the art of "thick description," but his own writing combines elegance, brevity, and lucidity to an unusual degree. The range of his scholarship is very extensive but seldom employed in a contentious manner. He is fortunate in holding a post at Princeton which allows him to devote his whole time to research, and he makes good use of his time. For the anthropological specialist in Indonesian affairs there is not a great deal in this book that is strictly new; some parts of it are rewritten versions of materials Geertz himself has presented elsewhere, but there is a functional coherence to the different strands of his argument which is welcome and in some ways unexpected.

It needs to be stressed that Geertz is a cultural anthropologist whose first commitment is to a specifically American academic tradition which must be distinguished from the social anthropology which is represented by the work of the present reviewer and which is generally practiced by British exponents of the art of anthropology.

The distinction is not easy to explain in simple language. Very roughly, social anthropology is concerned with the analysis of networks of interpersonal relationships; cultural anthropology, with the description of styles of life and the interpretation of such "styles of life" as meaningful systems of symbols. Social anthropologists ordinarily pay much more attention to the structural/functional interdependence of the different facets of the social system they are describing than do cultural anthropologists, whose viewpoint (in the eyes of their critics) is unduly intuitive and impressionistic. However, there are many bridge points between the two approaches and one of these is of particular importance in this book.

Because Geertz was at one time a pupil of Talcott Parsons, he always has been much influenced by the writings of Max Weber, a sociological theorist who is also greatly admired by the social anthropologists. A central theme in *Negara* is that the assumptions concerning the nature and objectives of political

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power, which most social anthropologists have taken over from Weber and which they share with most political theorists of European background, are inadequate to explain the observed facts in the case of the 19th-century Indonesian state.

Hitherto British anthropologists have shown only qualified respect for Geertz's work. They have recognized the excellence of *Islam Observed* (1968) which, in very brief compass, makes a highly insightful comparison between Islam as interpreted by Indonesians and Islam as interpreted by Moroccans. But this was a particular case to which the "impressionism" of cultural anthropological analysis was particularly well suited. But in other writings, such as the early *Peddlars and Princes* (1963), a comparison of economic developments in two Indonesian towns, and *Kinship in Bali* (1975), written jointly with Hildred Geertz, it has seemed to the British that the means were ill adapted to the end and that a social anthropological approach would have been much more appropriate. They are not likely to have reservations of this sort with regard to the present book.

Although Weber is criticized, his influence remains very strong. The book is about 19th-century Bali, but the *negara* that is described (the word denotes the miniature "state" which constituted the unit of political identity in most parts of pre-colonial Indonesia) is an "ideal type" in the Weberian style, many features of which were to be found not only in other parts of Indonesia but also in many other parts of Southeast Asia. For example, in general form, there is little difference between the *negara*, as here described, and the corresponding units of Thai/Burmese society usually referred to as *mong* or *maing*.

The model for the whole is provided by Tabanan, one of seven tiny "kingdoms," each only a few miles across, which constituted the South Bali heartland that was annexed by the Dutch colonialists only in 1906. As each of the kingdoms was captured the respective royal families managed, in one way or another, to commit spectacular suicide. It was, as Geertz puts it, "quite literally the death of the old order. It expired as it had lived: absorbed in a pageant."

The content of the book is formally concerned with how these royal families were constituted, their relationship to the endogamous kin groups (*dadia*) of which they were components, the structure and mode of operation and control of the irrigated rice lands on which the economy of the system depended, and, above all, the nature of the political relationship that linked royalty to land and people. In places the detail is very impressive, but the account remains that of an ideal type rather than of an actual system. The close observer will notice that only one of the maps is marked with a scale.

But Geertz's objective goes far beyond that of providing us with a model of how an Indonesian *negara* might actually have worked. In the concluding chapter, which carries the title "Bali and Political Theory," he argues that his model presents a challenge to the whole body of "power centered" political theory which runs from Machiavelli through Hobbes to Marx, Pareto, and de Jouvenel.

I am not prepared to go very far down this road, though I agree with some parts of the argument, but Geertz's position on this general issue deserves attention. In the book this piece of "inverted Weber" political theory is put at the end, as if it were a logical inference from the details of Bali ethnography that have gone before. This is fair enough. But there are many potential readers who may initially be more interested in the general theory than they are in Bali. I would encourage such readers to read the conclusion first. They will then understand more easily just what the fine detail of ethnography, the "thick description" that has been given in earlier chapters, is really all about.

There are two main targets for Geertz's criticism. The first is Karl Wittfogel's link between "hydraulic society," "the Asiatic mode of production," and "Oriental despotism" operating through a hierarchy of officials responsible for the maintenance of the irrigation works. Here Geertz has an unanswerable, but not very original, case. Bali was, in its small way, a "hydraulic society," but the Wittfogel formula about the inevitable despotic power which accrues to the controlling manager of an elaborate irrigation system did not work out. But then it is very doubtful whether it ever worked out anywhere else. In recent years versions of operational "hydraulic systems" in China, Burma, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere have been carefully analyzed. In some cases the maintenance of these systems has entailed the existence of a permanent administrative bureaucracy, but no example has come to light in which the political authority

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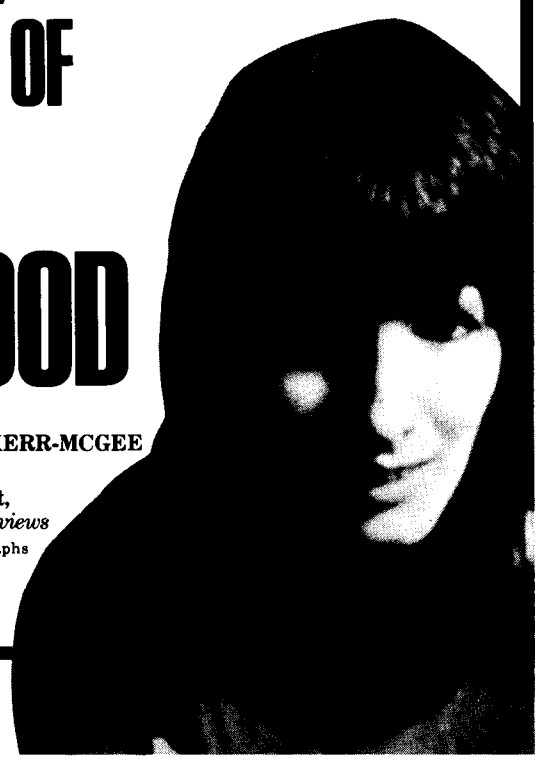

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of the "despot" at the center was critically dependent on control of the irrigation system.

Geertz's other major general theme needs to be viewed with greater caution. The hereditary kings of Indonesian *negara* were divine kings in the prototypical sense exhibited many years ago in A. M. Hocart's various writings about kingship. Everything connected with their royal office was surrounded by pageantry. Political theorists tend to take such pageantry for granted, treating it as mere playacting. What politics is really all about is the struggle for power: the control of men by other men exercised through control over primary economic resources of land and water.

But Geertz points out that even European forms of centralized authority have not always fitted tidily into this pattern. In modern English the word "state" and its adjectival adjuncts have a number of different meanings but the sense "a sovereign state" is relatively recent; "stateliness" in the sense of pomp and splendor is much older. The normal view of the political theorists, of the right as well as the left, is that the pomp and ceremony of monarchy is a fraud, "a dark noise to impress the impressionable and induce in them a trembling awe." The reality of state politics is concerned with "the capacity of elites to extract surpluses from the less well-placed and transfer them to themselves." In such a view state ceremony is seen as a business of "mystification, in the sense of the spiritualizing of material interests and the fogging over of material conflicts." In all varieties of such theory what Geertz calls "the semiotic aspects of the state" (i.e., the patterning of symbolization associated with ideas concerning royal authority) "remain so much mummery. They exaggerate might, conceal exploitation, inflate authority, or moralize procedure. The one thing they do not do is actuate anything."

Geertz does not deny that in Bali, as everywhere else, ambitious and powerful men exploited and oppressed their weaker neighbors, but the fantastic imagery of Balinese kingship was not, he insists, just playacting.

> To understand the *negara* is to . . . elaborate a poetics of power, not a mechanics. The idiom of rank not only formed the context within which the practical relationships of the major sorts of political actors . . . took their shape and had their meaning; it permeated as well the dramas they jointly mounted, the *décor théâtral* amid which they mounted them, and the larger purposes they mounted them for. The state drew its force, which was real enough, from its imaginative energies, its semiotic capacity to make inequality enchant. . . . The notion that politics is an unchanging play of natural passions, which particular institutions of domination are but so many devices for exploiting, is wrong everywhere; in Bali, its absurdity is patent. The passions are as cultural as the devices; and the turn of mind—hierarchy, sensory, symbolistic, and theatrical—that informs the one informs the other.

These quotations all come a few pages from the end of the book. I have quoted them here at length not simply because they summarize the essence of Geertz's theoretical position but because they indicate where, as anthropologists, Geertz and I part company. That final quotation is, in my view, complete rubbish. I can make no sense of a line of thought which claims that "passions" are culturally defined. From my prejudiced position as a social anthropologist this passage reveals with startling clarity the ultimately radical weakness of the basic assumption of cultural anthropology, namely, that not only are cultural systems infinitely variable, but that human individuals are products of their culture rather than of their genetic predisposition.

What Geertz has to tell us about the role of competitive display in traditional Indonesian politics is not only interesting in itself but is very often of comparative interest for parts of the world many thousands of miles from Bali. But for Geertz "culture" is ultimately a patterned system of symbols in individual human minds rather than a set of techniques for wresting a living from the environment. Again and again he implies that the superstructure of ideology is of greater significance than the infrastructure of basic economic need. One does not have to be a wholehearted Marxist to feel that this argument is flawed at its roots.

So for me, as a fellow professional anthropologist, it is the earlier part of the book with its ethnographic detail rather than the later part with its overstretched cultural theory that provides the focus of interest.

Here criticism is difficult because the book is a historical study. Geertz has undertaken fieldwork in Bali, but it was under the postwar, Javanese-dominated, Indonesian government, which was much closer to that of the Dutch colonialists than it was to indigenous 19th-century Balinese rule. So his presentation of the Balinese *negara* in terms of ideal types and models was not just a matter of making complicated matters easy to understand, it was unavoidable. Geertz provides a very convincing account of how such a system *might* have worked; in this respect his account is unexpectedly "functionalist," showing, in a now unfashionable way, how very different types of institutions fit together to form a meaningful and economically viable whole. Nevertheless it remains a model. There is hardly any evidence about actual individuals, actual land holdings, actual systems of irrigation and their control. It seems to me altogether improbable that the facts on the ground really bore a close relationship to the patterns in the model. I am not challenging the model; I would just like to know what sort of compromises were introduced to make fact and fiction fit together.

But that is a pedantic objection. As a matter of fact Geertz has managed to discover a certain amount of on-the-spot, directly observed material, the most remarkable being that provided by the journals of Ludvig Helms, who

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was in Bali as a merchant's assistant in the late 1840s and who published his recollections in English in 1882. These records include a detailed account of the funeral of the king of Gianjar in December 1847, in the course of which

> the body was burned with great pomp, three of his concubines sacrificing themselves in the flames. It was a great day for the Balinese. It was some years since they had had the chance of witnessing one of these awful spectacles, a spectacle that meant for them a holiday with an odour of sanctity about it; and all the remaining Rajahs of Bali made a point of being present, either personally or by proxy, and brought large followings.

The words are those of Helms and provide the opening of a four-page citation from Helms's book. It is Geertz's achievement that, without sentimentalizing the issue, he is able to transform this scene, which provoked Helms's deep disgust, into a poetic imagery which arouses our respect for a wholly alien way of life in which even the "barbarities" of obligatory suicide attain a kind of aesthetic perfection.

As the reader of this review will have noticed, this book offends against some of my deepest anthropological prejudices, but it is certainly a book that deserves to be read, and not only by anthropologists.

Edmund Leach

Edmund Leach, author of *Claude Lévi-Strauss* (Viking), is a fellow of King's College, Cambridge.

Mrs. Miniver in Parliament

Nancy Astor: A Lady Unashamed by John Grigg

(Little, Brown; $15)

In the British General Election of December 1918, 17 women, taking advantage of a brand-new law, stood as candidates for Parliament. In Ireland the Countess Markievicz was indeed elected for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin: an ardent Sinn Feiner, she refused to take an oath of allegiance. Of the other 16 in Great Britain, none succeeded.

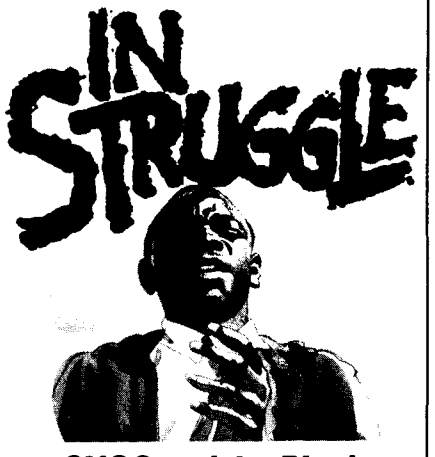
In October 1919 William Waldorf Astor, first Viscount Astor, died and his elder son, Major William Waldorf Astor, MP for Plymouth, succeeded to an immense fortune derived originally from the plunder of the American fur trade reinvested in Manhattan real estate, and also to a seat in the House of Lords. Like Anthony Trollope's Plantagenet Palliser, when he became duke of Omnium, Major Astor faced the prospect with dismay: he was nothing if not a House of Commons man and, as parliamentary secretary to the Ministry of Health, already had a foot on the ministerial ladder. But the law in those days was inexorable, and after a little persuasion, his wife Nancy, the formidable subject of this studiously researched biography, consented to stand for his vacant seat. After a vigorous campaign, she won the by-election with a substantial majority over her two opponents and thus became the first woman to sit in the House of Commons.

Born in Danville, Virginia, in 1879, one of the "beautiful Langhorne sisters," she spent her first years in a crowded, poverty-stricken home under the control of a father who was both evil tempered and a heavy drinker. The family circumstances dramatically improved, but she remained a lifelong enemy of poverty, drink, and male dominance in about that order.

Destiny, which lures like to like even in the unlikeliest form, brought her to England in 1903 after a disastrous first marriage; here an Edwardian upper class almost eagerly welcomed her combination of beauty, high spirits, outrageous talk, and strict religious and moral principle. In 1906 she married William Waldorf Astor, whose father, that transplanted Croesus, gave them Cliveden for a wedding present with a huge financial settlement to keep it going. Cliveden was an imposing structure on the banks of the Thames in Buckinghamshire; in the previous century it had been restored by Sir Charles Barry into the semblance of an Italian palazzo; under her authoritarian rule, with her snobbish fondness for royalty and old titled families but otherwise catholic taste in guests, it became something between a stately home and a country club.

It was in the period between World Wars I and II that Lady Astor came into her own. At her Plymouth by-election, she toured the constituency in an open two-horse carriage with a liveried coachman, declaring that while her Labour opponent (who had been a pacifist in the later war) "represented the shirking classes," she "represented the working classes." For a viscountess who was also a multimillionaire and the mistress of four houses, this was sheer effrontery, a typical example of what John Grigg calls her vaudeville manner and also of her small attention to the fitness of things. Yet she probably meant it. Poverty was one of the great Victorian legacies to the 20th century, of which Plymouth received its full share; and ever since her husband's election in 1910, had she not been an industrious, cheerful, and at times even welcome visitor to its horrible tenements?

In the House of Commons she was surrounded by males who regarded a woman MP much as Samuel Johnson did a woman preacher. "Sir," said that



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master of flagrant unreason, "a woman preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all." Impudent and high-spirited, she refused to be daunted either by rank prejudice or by what Mr. Grigg calls "the mystique and mumbo-jumbo" of that venerable institution. From the beginning she showed no regard for the status, class, or even party affiliation of the men around her, and little for the decencies of debate. It is to be noted that Lloyd George, who had no bump of veneration, always liked her. But to Winston Churchill, the last great exponent of the House of Commons manner at its stuffiest and formerly a close friend, she was nothing but a nuisance. From then onward they never got along. ("If I were your wife," she was once heard to say to him, "I'd put poison in your coffee." "If I were your husband," he retorted, "I'd drink it.") For two years she was the only woman in the Commons; and she remained a member for the Sutton Division of Plymouth until 1945, when its Conservative committee decided that it wanted her no more.

When World War I ended, it was generally considered to be the prelude to a new, happier, more humane and equitable world. No one who has read them can forget the words that William Brace, the miners' leader, addressed to a privately skeptical prime minister in October 1919. "The war," he said, "has put us 25 years at least ahead of where we were in 1914. Our men have come to the conclusion that they are something infinitely more majestic than wage-earners." This was soul-stirring, if a little utopian: yet it had in a moderate way already been spelled out by the reconstructionists who, working from within the government, had suggested a series of rational reforms—in housing, health, education, pensions, land settlement, and so forth.

Reconstruction collapsed in 1922 with the ruthless official disman tling of Addison's housing plans; the workers' hope for control of their destinies through direct action died with the aborted General Strike in 1926; "the land fit for heroes to live in" became a sort of wasteland; and the war, though privately mourned with unmatched intensity, far from being nationally remembered in terms of a new order, was nationally forgotten in a return to the old—in the revival of the gold standard, in the banalities of Stanley Baldwin, in the orthodox economics of Philip Snowden. Nor did reconstruction reappear until after World War II.

In such a counter-public world Lady Astor flourished in her capacity as generous and serious reformer. With the help of Lord Astor, who had once been a reconstructionist, she busied herself in planning and building model houses and creating recreational areas for the poor in Plymouth; in supporting a nationwide campaign for nursery schools for working mothers; in pushing temperance legislation through the House of Commons. At the same time she held it as a cardinal principle that reforms should be undertaken by the private sector with as little help from the state as possible. Anything else, said Lady Astor, would be "socialism." Lord Astor could only concur.

In the late 1920s World War I was remembered again, but in a new and sullen guise. In book after book it was denounced as a gross deception, compounded by military incompetence and lying propaganda and practiced upon the whole human race. Later on with Hitler's rise to power it entirely lost its character of "the war to end all wars." Obviously, unless some diplomatic miracle or timely death occurred, war would come again. Here Lady Astor once more came forward with a naive and uninformed solution: European peace must be maintained through appeasement. The appeasing mood was fairly general; her methods were not. With execrably bad taste she cosied up to such people as the horrible, humorless Ribbentrop, and it was at a luncheon in her London house that Neville Chamberlain, before the Nazis had mentioned it, suggested a surrender of the Sudetenland!

In Cliveden for years there had assembled, originally under the tutelage of the late Lord Milner, a group of intellectuals who called themselves the Round Table and who discussed the future of the English-speaking peoples, the metaphysics of empire, and the nature of social reform. Since their meetings or "moots" were in secret, and no article in their quarterly journal was signed, there hung around them a cloud of mystery which now darkened into suspicion. They were now called the Cliveden Set and were widely held to be pro-Nazi plotters. Since they were deeply divided on the question of appeasement and since Lady Astor abominated Hitler, and said so in no uncertain terms after he entered Prague, these suspicions were apparently unfounded, although one can never quite clear her of the taint of anti-Semitism. During the war she spent much of her time in her beloved Plymouth, enduring its terrible blitzings with exemplary courage. But her reputation was damaged, her clown-

A MICHIGAN GHOSTTOWN

It's as though even the ghosts
Have left: no sense of anyone
Lingering here; nothing to weight
The hundreds of poplars—locally
"Popple"—flickering in the light
Breezing of a cool Superior
Noon. Had I not been told
Where to pick out the vined
Roots of a settlement, I might
Have seen no trace at all.
It was nothing
But a boomtown, a roof
And a drink, built to last
As long as the timber did, which
Wasn't long. Yet the buzzsaws spun
Mounds and mounds of gold
Dust before they were done.

Up here, back then, it was boom-and-bust;
And after the bust
Sixty, seventy years of thin
Northern sun, of fog turning to snow,
And a tentative, tendrilous
Scrapping with rock and ice,
A re-routing of roots,
A noiseless supplanting as
The popple moved back in—

Trees take the streets.

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ing style seemed old-fashioned, and she was not asked to stand again. The new world, it seemed, had little room for ladies bountiful.

This biography endeavors to be fair to her charm, her courage, and especially her self-confidence (which, Grigg says, she institutionalized by her conversion to Christian Science), but a tone of apology runs throughout it. Grigg calls her "a compulsive chatterbox" and the epithet is exactly right. There was another side to this pioneer politician, this internationally famous hostess, this friend of Bernard Shaw, this confidante of T. E. Lawrence. In the heart of everyone's psyche there lurks a Cretan monster, the ravening Id, and in Lady Astor its presence is uncomfortably evident. She was passionately possessive in her friendships, a bully to her servants, a devouring and destructive mother to her elder children. Her wit was more like a javelin than a rapier, and when aroused she did not care whom it wounded or how. This book is well written and interesting, but the "Lady Unashamed" herself grows steadily more burdensome and displeasing, and one lays it down with a sigh of relief.

George Dangerfield

George Dangerfield is a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian.

An Elegant First Novel

Dale Loves Sophie to Death by Robb Forman Dew

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $11.95)

Every year, at the start of summer vacation, Dinah and Martin Howells drive west from their home in the Berkshires to Enfield, Ohio, where Dinah grew up. With their three children, they catalog the landmarks that signify the approach of Enfield: the diner shaped like Aunt Jemima, reformed in recent times to an artificially pink Aunt Betsy; and the railway overpass with its unfading legend, "Dale Loves Sophie to Death."

Every year, Dinah and Martin spend two motionless weeks in the house they rent from another family (a family which, in its own fixed pattern, summers elsewhere). Then Martin returns home by plane, and Dinah stays on in Enfield and settles into a lulling routine not too far removed from her childhood. She chauffeurs her children to the swimming pool, arranges an occasional dinner party or child's birthday party, and idly converses with her mother or her brother or old friends. But above all, she simply exists: savoring her morning coffee before the children wake. Shopping at the village grocery store. Slowly and luxuriously cutting carrots and potatoes into ovals. Watching TV. Visiting the zoo.

Robb Forman Dew's first novel, which is quiet and complex and arrestingly elegant, describes a summer like any other in Dinah's life. There's the same exhausting car trip; same nearly claustrophobic two weeks ending in Martin's wrenching departure; same languid, annual siege of flu; same return to a mindless whiling away of time. But *Dale Loves Sophie to Death* is also very specific, even startling, in a subtle way. This is a particular summer, with a particular, unsettling undertone. It is as plotless as all of Dinah's summers, but made riveting by her sensitivity to the vague threats and promises of her supposedly uneventful existence.

Sensitivity, in fact, is what sets this book apart—not the itchy, precious kind that irritates the reader, but a genuine alertness to life's secret signals. Dinah is the daughter of parents who bewilder her—an aloof and absent-minded mother, a father eccentric to the point of outright craziness. (A three-board sign on his lawn reads "Psychiatry; Electroencephalograms; Fortunes Told.") Perhaps because she has spent her youth scrutinizing these two people, ferreting out their convoluted messages, Dinah is so wary and receptive that she seems to lack a certain protective layer of skin that ordinary people possess. Things come through to her instantly, intuitively. For her husband, she is a kind of antenna:

> She knew, for instance, that Martin relied on her to interpret her environment for him if she happened to be there. Even as small a gesture as touching his

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> arm at a party might settle for him the fact that the gathering was hospitable, not unfriendly. Dinah could discern the nature of the atmosphere immediately by taking into account even the rugs on the floor or the arrangement of the chairs. It was not the quality or stylishness to which she gave credence, but she was alert to any sympathetic alignment of the most ordinary objects. The place need not be handsome; it was just that about her surroundings Dinah was like a dog; some rooms raised the hackles on her back. If Martin saw her come into a room and relax and enjoy herself, then she knew he could enjoy himself as well.

She understood that her mother's ill-prepared meals—"marbelized" scrambled eggs and toast with a flat pat of butter in the center—are more than they appear. They are, in fact, "gestures: the eggs broken, not just boiled, the toast pre-buttered—even the butter itself, rather than margarine. They were quite generous gestures from a woman who cared not at all about food but had a melancholy interest, generally, in the people she fed, and especially in these children to whom she acknowledged a connection."

She knows that the ultimate sign of trust, when inhabiting another family's house, is to go ahead and use up their half-empty jar of mustard instead of throwing it out. She catches the fact that when her father becomes *too* strange, people are more willing to talk to her about him, as if charitably dissociating the two of them. She detects the false tone that she uses to her most difficult child in front of outsiders, and she knows that he detects it, too; she sees that she and this child resemble "television lovers, running toward each other across a great, grassy distance, their arms wide open in expectation . . . [perhaps] charted just enough off-course so that they were destined to hurtle past each other, heavy with love and good intentions, but inevitably missing their target." And she is almost painfully open to her feelings about her oldest son:

> He was not necessarily the nicest of their children, nor could it yet be said that he would be the most handsome, but he had been the first. It was not even that they loved him best; of course, he was not always loveable at all. It was just that beneath the surface of their consciousness there was an awareness of David that registered every shadow and nuance of his altering sensibilities. Their curiosity could never be assuaged by anything he might reveal about himself. They yearned after whatever it was that was at the core of his personality, so puzzling to them was his blossoming independence.

Wisely, Robb Forman Dew has interspersed Dinah's perceptions with Martin's. If we're tempted, halfway through, to declare this a "woman's novel" (delicate, vibrating with hidden meanings, so personal that when Dinah dusts her sirloin cubes with powdered ginger, I reached for a pencil to write down her shish kebab recipe), then Martin's chapters set us straight. They're solid, dense, painted with a wider brush. Clearly the author has more than one voice at her disposal. She steps inside this man without apparent effort. When he experiences a moment of sorrowful lust for another woman, it is credible and understandable. When he mourns his wife's long absence, we are touched by the grocery lists and tidied bins of toys she has left behind her. And when he exults in his bachelor arrangement of food dished directly upon a sterilized, stainless steel surgical cart, we can laugh at him and sympathize, simultaneously.

I was set on guard by the title of this book; I dreaded one of those ironic plots where love leads to murder. Well, this is not that kind of story at all, of course. But the title is fitting, even so. *Dale Loves Sophie to Death* describes the enduring, undying kind of love that weathers separation, guilt, missed cues, children's illnesses, and the scars of the past. It is as inconclusive and as complicated as real life. It's an impressive first novel.

Anne Tyler

Starring SDS

The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left by Todd Gitlin

(University of California Press; $12.95)

Why did Barbara Walters interview Abbie Hoffman last fall? Why are we all so aware that Jerry Rubin gave up politics for Wall Street and Rennie Davis radicalism for religion? At the same time, why do we hear little about figures of the 1960s whose paths have been more consistent with their politics of a decade ago? How did Barbara miss Dave Dellinger, a Chicago 7 defendant, as much a radical activist now as then? Or Staughton Lynd, who gave up teaching radical history to take a law degree and help organize workers in Youngstown, Ohio? Or Alan Haber, the founder of SDS, living in a carpentry collective and loyal to his radical views? Or Paul Booth, an early SDS president, still a community organizer in Chicago? Or Todd Gitlin, another SDS president, who in *The Whole World Is Watching* has just written a stunning critique of the mass media and a provocative reappraisal of the new left?

Gitlin, a Berkeley sociologist, provides some answers to such questions. He seeks to understand how the media lead us to misconstrue and misremember our history. Specifically, he studies how the *New York Times* and CBS News covered SDS, how that coverage shaped SDS itself, and how, by extension, the media simultaneously celebrate and undermine other mass movements.

The book has three parts. First, and most successfully, Gitlin analyzes CBS and *New York Times* coverage of SDS in 1965, when the media giants first noticed the five-year-old organization. Second, he argues that mass media coverage from 1965 to 1970 spurred first the national growth and then the dissolution of SDS. Finally, he tries out the fashionable notion of "hegemony" as a theoretical capstone to his study.

In Part I, Gitlin is at his best in close readings of news stories, photos, and films. When the *Times* wrote, in its first story on SDS, "They are mindful that their numbers are tiny," Gitlin observes how "They are mindful" changes what might have been a sentence that belittled the group into one that suggested self-awareness and realism. Later, the *Times* was less sympathetic. Reporting the April 17, 1965, antiwar march in Washington, the *Times* counted 15,000 protesters and 100 counterdemonstrators but ran a UPI photo showing demonstrators and counterdemonstra-

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tors in equal numbers outside the White House. The photo was used "visually to equate the antiwar and right-wing demonstration." Was it the only photo available? No; Gitlin digs up other UPI photos available that day, including some both more informative and compositionally superior but not so primly "balanced."

The coverage not only deprecated the march visually, but "trivialized" it by failing to cover the speeches or picket signs, and "marginalized" it by playing up the "beards and blue jeans" motif. In contrast, Gitlin compares *Times* coverage of the civil rights march in Selma three weeks earlier. The lead on the antiwar march: "More than 15,000 students and a handful of adults picketed the White House in warm spring sunshine today, calling for an end of the fighting in Vietnam." The lead on the Selma march: "The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led 25,000 Negroes and whites to the shadow of the state Capitol here today and challenged Alabama to put an end to racial discrimination." Gitlin observes that "shadow" suggests something menacing about Alabama's government and so portrays the marchers as serious, brave, and "challenging." In contrast, "warm spring sunshine," an accurate weather report, implies a hospitable and welcoming White House and so depreciates the antiwar challenge to authority.

This is one of the rare studies of the press that actually pays close attention to the fare the media provide. Gitlin's attention to detail shows not only a sociologist with an eye for relevant issues but a poet (he is, among other things, a published poet) with an ear for the language that illuminates them. Point by small point, Gitlin shows that the press discounted SDS, "framing" it in ways to trivialize it.

In Part II, Gitlin extends his reach, becoming less definitive, more suggestive. He argues that the media's search for the eye-catching, front-page, newsworthy story encourages mass movements to inflate their rhetoric and promotes the careers of celebrity-seekers rather than genuine leaders. This latter point is especially well handled. Gitlin reminds us that the early SDS was tenaciously committed to participatory democracy, localism, and group decision-making. Leaders who emerged tended to distrust leadership, even their own. Uneasy in the limelight, they were unprepared to deal with the media. This "old guard" SDS—publicity-shy young people concerned with developing in SDS a "rich internal intellectual life," as one memo put it—stumbled in the media spotlight. A CBS cameraman recalls that efforts to rotate speakers in Bay Area organizing broke down because "either you allow them (the media) to make certain people stars or you don't get your message out over the air." While Gitlin repeatedly criticizes SDS and nowhere attributes its faults and problems solely to the media, he nonetheless is convincing that routine media coverage weakened efforts at democratic leadership, encouraged militance in action, and inhibited radicalism in thought.

As for the leaders the media picked out and played up, they rarely had support in the mass movement itself. Jerry Rubin, for instance, was among the "isolated leader-celebrities, attached indirectly to unorganized constituencies reached only through mass media, unaccountable to rooted working groups." He had little connection to the new left but he enjoyed a symbiotic attachment to the media.

Gitlin's explanation for the media's coverage of SDS is woven through the book but stated most boldly in the concluding theoretical section. There he explores the notion of hegemony, a concept from the writings of Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci, used these days among leftist historians and sociologists as if it had magical powers. It allows leftists to take culture seriously without feeling guilty about jettisoning Marxist baggage of "base" and "superstructure." Though the term is not strictly relevant to the book's worth, it is the word that will attract readers on the left as surely as it will deter people sniffing for Marxist jargon. (It put off both *Times* reviewers, who proceeded to castigate a practically jargon-free book as jargon-ridden.) At any rate, "hegemony" simply means that ruling groups require ideology as well as force to govern, and that ideological sway is not the power to impose views but the ability to make congenial views appear entirely natural and unimposed.

This concept leads to an awkward conflict between Gitlin the sociologist with theoretical ambitions and Gitlin the oral historian of the new left. The theorist would like to demonstrate that "hegemony" sustains the current order through everyday routines. The oral historian demonstrates that, in the case

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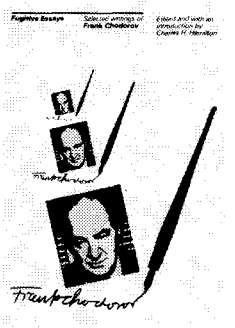

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of the new left, top management set routines aside and interfered in normal news production to assure that its views would prevail. William Paley and Frank Stanton overrode Fred Friendly and documentary producer Arthur Barron to sanitize a documentary on "The Berkeley Rebels," and there was a "command decision" at CBS not to cover the 1969 Moratorium in Washington live. Unfortunately for Gitlin-theorist, his case study is situated in an era when the country was deeply divided and normal activity broke down. Ideological sway required blatant political interference in the press. Reading about it even now is enraging. Still, Gitlin would have us direct our anger elsewhere, not to the occasional overt political intervention but to the political implications of media conventions and rituals.

Gitlin attends to two sorts of normal distortion. There is bias in the normal routines of journalism *and* in their discretionary application. For the latter, Gitlin notes that in the fall of 1965 the *Times* ran four stories on student antiwar activity where only authorities antagonistic to the students were quoted and not a single student opinion was cited, despite the journalistic practice of seeking out speakers on both sides of a conflict. On the other hand, a CBS news "take-out" on Rennie Davis was barred from the air because CBS executives said the sympathetic portrait of Davis had not been "balanced" with counterviews. "Balance" is invoked or ignored as it suits the balancers.

Even when routines are used even-handedly, they lead to certain consequences: "When reporters make decisions about what to cover and how, rarely do they deliberate about ideological assumptions or political consequences. Simply by doing their jobs, journalists tend to serve the political and economic elite definitions of reality." This is the book's refrain, nicely supported when Gitlin interviewed *Times* editor Max Frankel, who acknowledged that antiwar activity received greater coverage as more legitimate leaders, especially senators, supported it. "And then naturally the tone of the coverage changed. Because we're an Establishment institution, and whenever your natural community changes its opinion, then naturally you will too." *Naturally*, which is precisely Gitlin's point.

The Whole World Is Watching has its share of problems. Gitlin mentions that CBS and the *Times*, overall, treated the antiwar movement ambivalently in 1965. The *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Daily News* attacked it as communist-inspired. That is no small difference, but Gitlin does not speak of media differences or try to explain them.

Nor does Gitlin resolve the problem of just how unusual the treatment of SDS was. On the one hand, he shows that SDS was unusually vulnerable to the press. Ideologically fatherless, organizationally newborn, SDS sought out the media as approving parent. Located too frequently in the mass culture itself, simply substituting Bob Dylan for the Beach Boys and *The Battle of Algiers* for James Bond, SDS did not have a "sustaining base for its oppositional political culture." In contrast, the United Farm Workers, with a narrower social base and a commitment to more limited goals, with a masterful leader whose media prominence was not resented by others in his movement, found itself in the media spotlight without suffering the heatstroke that helped cut down SDS. On the other hand, Gitlin suggests that the anti-nuclear movement's relationship to the media has followed the SDS pattern. Why one group gets one kind of treatment and another group a different kind is a problem Gitlin raises but does not explore.

There is a problem in tone, too. Sometimes Gitlin is didactic. More often, though, the fault is just the opposite—a tentative searching for the right word or phrase and a tendency to use both rather than pick one. A frame both "minimizes and muffles," the politics of confrontation was "not simply an expression of theatric tactics out of context, not simply an effusion of surrealism," the radical intelligentsia was prepared "for various forms of domination, for collaboration in the established order of power and privilege," and so on

Gitlin, it seems, is still like the early leader of SDS that he was, a bit ambivalent about leadership, not quite able to pull it all together to make a coherent summation. Like the early SDS, he seeks to create a "rich internal intellectual life" without the aid of a substantial intellectual tradition. Thus he engages in parochial sociological debates and some readers may be disturbed that the book is occasionally too "internal." But more readers, I think, will be gratified that Gitlin has made a rare attempt to discuss the media with intellectual sophistication and has, moreover, sustained it.

Michael Schudson

Michael Schudson is the author of *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (Basic Books).

Logorrhea!

Darconville's Cat
by Alexander Theroux

(Doubleday; $15.95)

"None would wish it longer." Thus Dr. Johnson on *Paradise Lost*. Thus any reader not named Theroux on *Darconville's Cat*. Still, if you have a month to spare and want to put muscle on your vocabulary, you might dip into it, only go slowly, one toe at a time, as if the book were a Maine bay. It's actually a romance about a young professor at a Virginia girls' college who falls in love, as one might fall into the maw of Mount Saint Helens, with an even younger student, whom he courts, and is on the point of marrying when she calls it off. She (Isabel) loves a sailor, you see. Darconville, the spurned professor, takes revenge by writing this novel, which, among many other things, is a summa of misogyny. Darconville's bad luck in love is not the main source of this spleen; it is the teaching of Dr. Crucifer, a gypsy scholar who haunts the attic of Harvard's Adams House, where Darconville goes to teach after being jilted by Isabel. Dr. Crucifer is a self-administered eunuch, an erudite woman-hater, and a great snoring bore. He is a preposterous creation, and as he goes on and on and on, spewing his polysyllabic prejudices, even readers named Theroux must weary, stumble, finally fall, too exhausted to scale yet another immense, small-printed page. Page? Better call it a Calvary, for though this book begins in comedy, it ends in torture.

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Yet for the first 50 pages I thought I was scouting one of those oddball American masterpieces, like *Gravity's Rainbow*, which maul the categories of judgment. For one thing, the author had an extraordinary way with imagery. "Darconville was amused to find Mrs. Trappe setting a good pace, her hat so large, wagging, that she looked like a tip under a plate." For another, he displayed a Nabokovian gift for satiric invention, here matchlessly deployed against a rural Virginia town:

> They came to Quinsyburg's main street. It was a contingent down both sides, of shoulder to shoulder shops, a frontage dull and repetitious but saved from the blight of uniformity by cute mercantile jingles painted on each window—the poetic effusions of various local struldbrugs and place-proud retailers—which in small towns, for some peculiar reason, become a rich source of humor: United Dixiebelle Cup Co. ("Even Our Name Begins With You"); Quinsyburg Bedding Co. ("We Give You a Lot of Bunk"); The Old Dominion Outlet ("If Your Clothes Aren't Becoming to You, You Should Be Coming to Us"); Stars 'N Bars Exterminating Co. ("All Our Patients Die"); Piedmont Travel Service ("Please Go Away"); Southside Rug and Linoleum ("The Best Floor Show in Town"); The Virginia Shook Co. ("We'll Stave You In"); The Quinsyburg Gun Shop ("The First to Last"); and The Prince Edward Lumber Co. ("May We Strike a Chord for You?").

Other targets of this whimsical instrument include the president of Quinsyburg College, a Rabelaisian triumph named Greatracks, the Virginia belles whom Quinsyburg teaches never to go to the bathroom, the dotty faculty, and the circumambient Virginia rednecks, whose porcine table manners and Baptist bunkum are made the objects of memorable derision.

But already in the passage I quoted, which comes on page 18, you can see signs of ennui coming like the flicker of truck lights breaking the perfect night of a western highway. For there in the middle of the passage is the arcane word "struldbrug," which the OED says is from *Gulliver's Travels*, where it is used as "the native appellation of the Immortals in the Kingdom of Luggnagg." (Remember?) It doesn't retard the comic momentum of the passage, and only an obsessive would close the book to look the damned thing up. But it does catch the eye, shifting one's attention from the matter to the manner, from the comic world of Quinsyburg to the word-besotted brain of Alexander Theroux. Page 20 brings "tracasseries," "wonglers," and "hoopoes"; page 21, "antimologoumena" and "wompster." True, President Greatrack's welcoming speech to the coeds awaits us in the next chapter, and it is a thigh-slapper ("We were so poor," he tells the pampered belles, "we couldn't even pay attention"). But it is immediately followed by a flurry of words we didn't know we didn't know, words like "immoment" and "clenches" and "abstersives" and "caphalalgics." Had enough? Or would you prefer a little more "sphragistic" on your sandwich; perhaps a "senseflectum"; or a "jupon"; and be sure, like the Quinsyburg coeds, not to "guffle" your soup; and what is that "guttapercha object of unambiguous size and shape" the girls in the chemistry lab are playing with?

It goes on this way for several forests of paper. Mr. Theroux is just wild about words; in this respect, he makes his brother Paul (he of the train books), who favors onomatopoeic words like "canoodling," seem terse, when really he's more artful, more aware of how

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the sound of a word can lend a passage not merely color but mood. Alexander wants you to notice his words; Paul wants you to feel them. It's the difference between a show-off and an artist. Alexander simply cannot make his gaudy words evoke emotion. They just sit there on the page, inert, without suggestive power, like ostentatious thumbprints. Longing and betrayal are his subjects, but he doesn't realize these poignant feelings for us in the way that Nabokov, obviously his model, realizes Humbert's love for Lolita and his heartache over her preference for Quilty. Darconville's infatuation, Darconville's suffering, are described in spangling language; but it is all merely, well, words, words, and more words, which bring the musty smell of the dictionary into the text, and which never pass over into what Lawrence called "art-speech," that realm of expression where word, feeling, thought fuse at the highest pitch of intensity. And not only do Mr. Theroux's words fail to evoke what Nabokov called "human interest"; they also fail to quicken our sense of beauty. Reading *Darconville's Cat* is like looking at a vast abstract canvas that doesn't work. The artist is too conscious of his materials, and too deliberate; his will is doing his imagination's work. Isabel doesn't exist for us, Darconville is dim, so is everything outside of the southern satire. This is not literature; it is not even good fiction; it is a 700-page attack of logorrhea.

Jack Beatty

Correspondence, *from page 7*

with, Laqueur plays the old American game of scolding the Europeans for their shortcomings, while passing over those of the United States. "If you would remove the speck from your neighbor's eye. . . ."

Andrew Kingston
Charlottesville, Virginia

Flank attacks on privilege

To the editors:

TRB's March 7 column on the Reagan tax philosophy underlines a point liberals should not forget: those guys do not believe in redistribution *at all*. Settlement house-style charity—yes; taking from the rich to give to the poor—no. And unfortunately, much of the American public is also skeptical about using government to create more equality.

I do not know what our strategy should be in response. But perhaps while trying to hold the ground against their frontal assault, we should consider potentially more popular flank attacks on privelege, something like policies of home-front reform: internal restructuring of corporations, power redistribution at the local level, welfare programs channeled through private charities, and the like. Such routes may avoid the big-government stigma.

Claude S. Fischer
University of California
Berkeley, California

Muddying economic waters

To the editors:

My mouth dropped open as I read the editorial "The Budget-Cutters' Ball" in your February 28 issue. "We don't believe . . . that federal deficits are what cause inflation," you say. Reflexively, I responded, "You're mad!" Von Mises and Hayek and Friedman and Bill Simon, conservatives all, surely would say so. And I, a liberal, say so, too. Enoch Powell in the *Manchester Guardian* October 26, 1980, mades this clear, persuasive statement: "Inflation is, quite simply, a method of financing public expenditures. Apart from selling assets, there are three and only three methods of financing public expenditure: one is loans; the second is taxation; the third is inflation. All these methods transfer control of resources from the public to the state by different routes. Inflation does it by creating new money which, when the Government spends it, reduces the value of all other money in circulation by the same amount. Inflation is dishonest taxation, inasmuchas it enables government to get what it wants . . . then put the blame on everybody else for what it itself brought about."

So please, stop muddying the waters. It's bad enough that Ronnie Reagan dares espouse such economic claptrap as Kemp-Roth. When a presumably responsible journal makes a most irresponsible contribution to the dialogue, I can't help but yowl in pain.

James Walsh
Elizabethton, Tennessee

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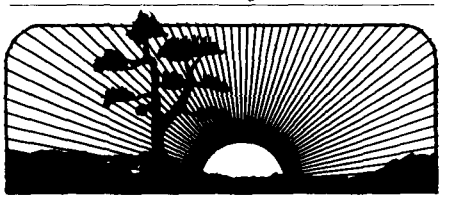

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Stanford Diarist

Change and No Change

I've taught at Stanford since 1967, and I'm often asked how the students have changed. The usual answer is that they've become more practical, at least if one construes the notion of practicality in a sufficiently narrow sense. A decade ago history was the largest major, now economics is. History won't do a thing for getting you a job, while economics, it is assumed, will. The ideal of a liberal education has given way to one of pre-professional training. The past couple of years, however, have seen a countertrend—at Stanford, Harvard, Brandeis, and elsewhere—in the form of required courses in that most useless of all subjects: Western culture. Every Stanford undergraduate now must take a year-long sequence on the Western tradition from the Greeks to the present, and although it's too soon to judge the success of the program, I can fairly report that many students consider it an outrageous waste of their time and their parents' money. Indeed, it is a regular source of complaint in their letters to the school newspaper. I always rush to defend the new requirement, pitching my apology—as apologists are wont to do—in the categories of the enemy, i.e., those of practicality. The defense, admittedly, is somewhat crude, but it has met with a friendly reception.

Viewed practically, life can be divided into three parts, each of which takes up roughly a third of our time. If we allow for individual idiosyncrasies, an adult's day consists of eight hours of sleeping, eight hours of earning a living, and eight hours of something else. A truly practical education ought to prepare us to do well by all of these. Sleep is the most easily disposed of. Short of an occasional course entitled "Sleep and Dreams," the university has virtually nothing to offer in this department. In a way it's remarkable that an activity to which such a large part of our lives is devoted should have attracted so little attention. In matters of sleep, we are all philistines, and students at Harvard or Stanford are no better off than their counterparts at less prestigious universities. Work, on the other hand, seems to have overwhelmed the educational process. One must guard against superciliousness here. At the present moment in the evolution of our species, the hard facts of existence demand that we spend a substantial portion of almost every day maintaining our material circumstances. Thus the student who tailors his or her education to obtain an enjoyable and lucrative job is being eminently sensible. Still, there are the remaining eight hours—the time that is neither work nor sleep—and they are arguably the most important of all. Many things whose successful negotiation is crucial to our happiness occur in these hours: our romantic and sexual lives, our relations with our parents and our children, our friendships, our politics, our play, and a variety of more prosaic but equally time-consuming enterprises such as eating, cleaning, and preening. Everyone agrees that these things matter, but do they respond to education? Needless to say, I don't have the answer to that question. Perhaps life itself is the only true educator in such elusive but critical realms. But if these matters are responsive, the sort of education from which students will profit most is surely the liberal education that the current generation of students inclines to think so unpractical. A liberal education has the virtue of exposing students to the most intelligent and thoughtful ideas about precisely these questions of everyday existence. The beneficiaries of such an education no longer have to respond to experience on an *ad hoc* basis. Instead they develop a system of references, derived, in part, from men and women both much smarter and much wiser than themselves. Viewed from this perspective, the study of *King Lear* may be just as practical as a course on "Money and Banking," at least if being a good parent or a good child is essential to the satisfaction one takes from life.

I began with the question of how students have changed, and I've followed the party line in regretting the intrusion of an ill-considered ideal of practicality into undergraduate education. But the new order has its virtues as well. Almost any teacher will tell you that our current students are nicer than the ones we taught a decade ago. To be sure, the compliment is double-edged, since niceness can also imply intellectual and political languor. Yet at least one aspect of their niceness reflects a deeper humanity, namely, the way they feel about their parents. I often ask my students to tell me about their families, and in recent years I generally have heard a story of mutual affection, which contrasts dramatically with the alienation that was standard fare in the late 1960s. The improvement of relations between students and parents is, of course, connected with the new practicality. For the most part students now conceive of their futures in terms very similar to those of their parents. Teachers aren't always pleased by this correspondence, because it means that certain of our society's injustices, which students of the 1960s scrutinized, are now handed on uncritically from one generation to the next. But anyone who witnessed the pain caused by the typical family antagonisms of a decade ago will be reluctant to dismiss the new cordiality as entirely retrogressive.

In one respect students have remained surprisingly the same, at least at a place like Stanford. And that is in their sexual lives. The past 10 years have seen a number of alterations in the physical and institutional structure of the university—things such as co-ed dorms and gay student unions—that, in conjunction with the generally more indulgent attitude of society, ought to have resulted in a liberalization of sexual behavior. But if one talks to students about such matters, one soon learns that the vast majority of them are still extraordinarily chaste. At Stanford the number who enjoy sexual relations with the kind of regularity that adults take for granted is minuscule. The prevailing sexual outlet today, as it was a decade ago, is masturbation. Moreover, there is no obvious correlation between abstinence and the much discussed revival of Christian fundamentalism; it is common to the secular and the religious alike. The persistence of such relative austerity shows once again that sex is a matter not of institutions but of psychology. The repression necessary to an education—to assuming the burdens of civilization—remains formidable. In Freudian terms, college is a time when energies are concentrated on fashioning an ego, and the id necessarily gets neglected. Thus our students find themselves in the ironic—and slightly unfair—position of being thought libertines by their elders, while leading lives that, in practice, differ remarkably little from those of the previous generation.

Paul Robinson

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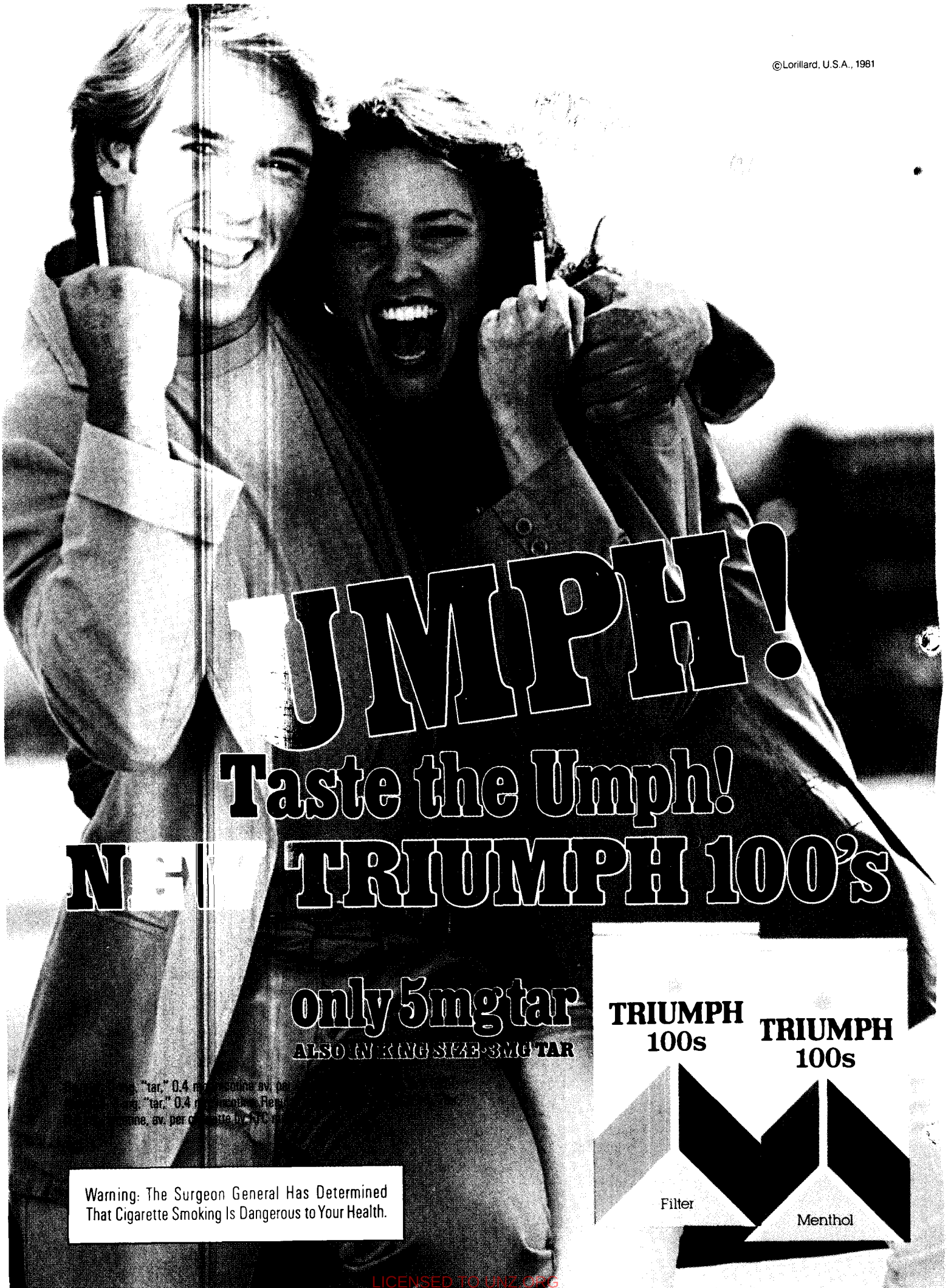

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